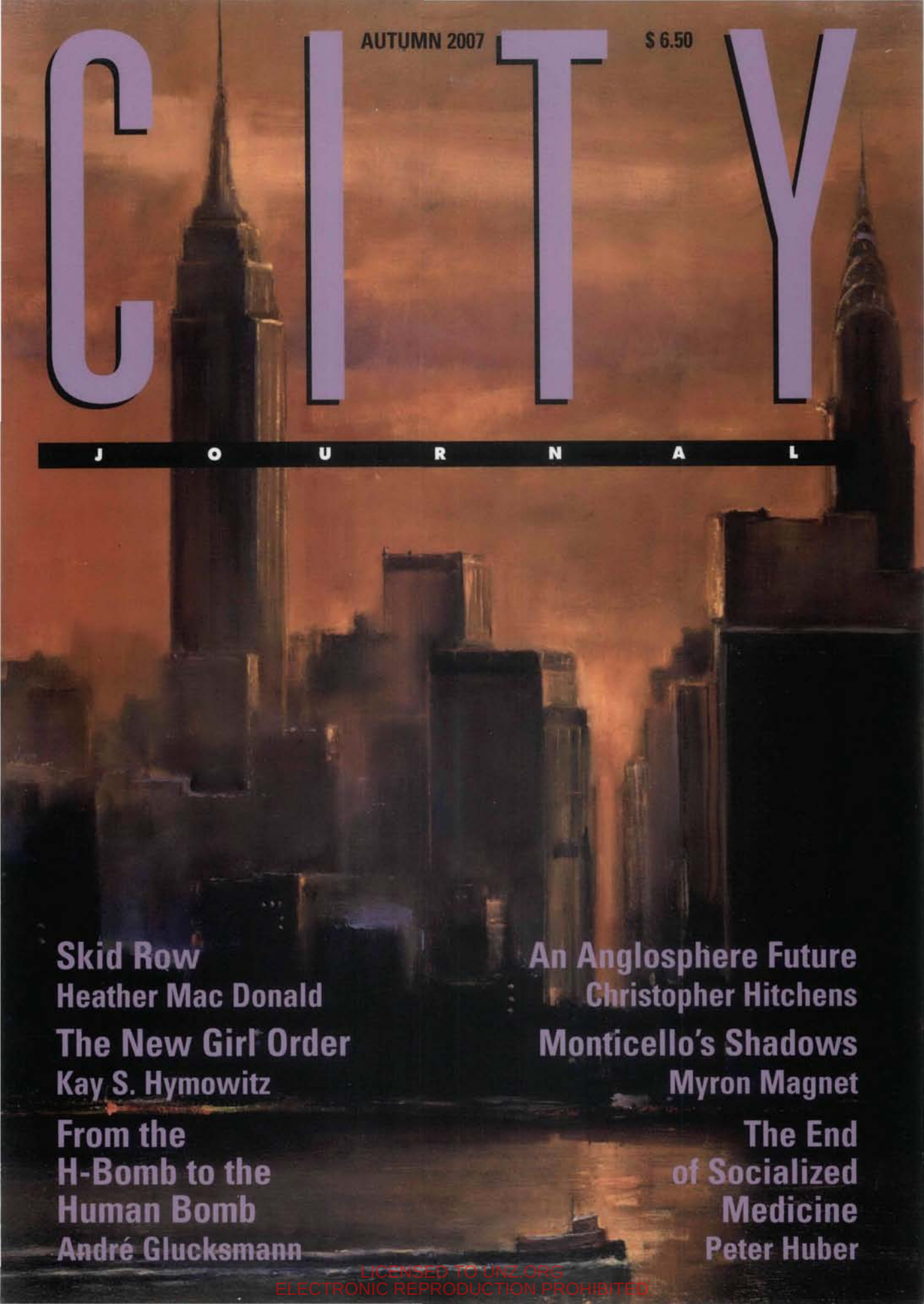

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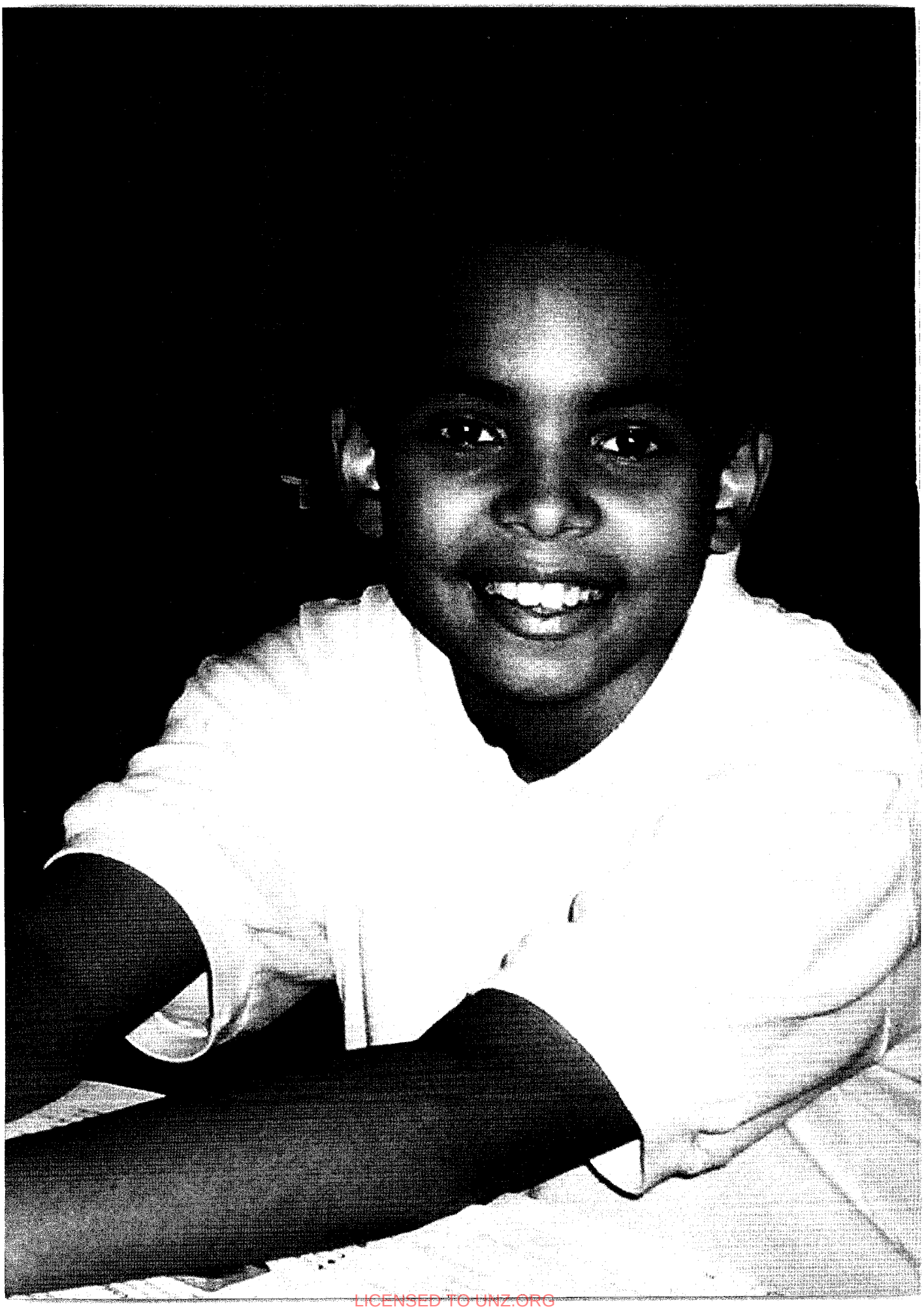

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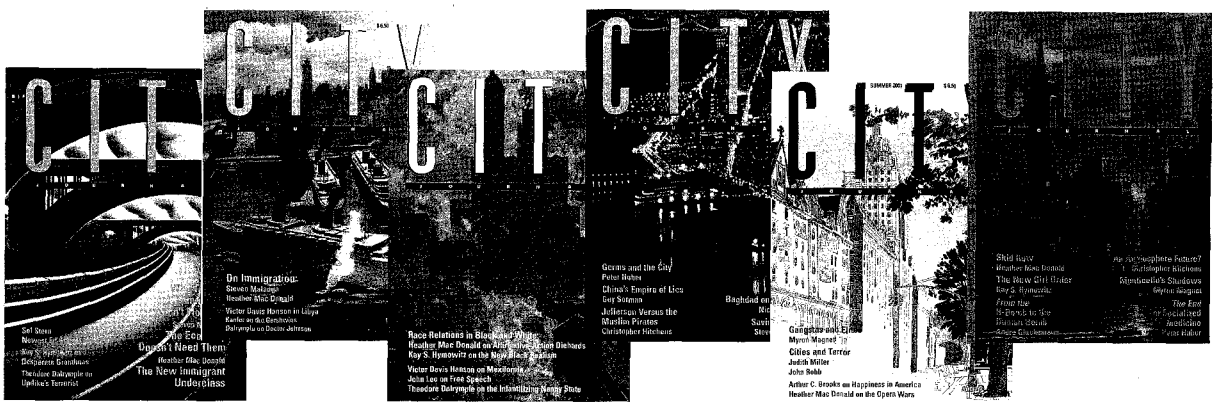

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In Prospect

Los Angeles's Skid Row had long been America's most squalid urban turf, dominated by mentally ill vagrants, drug dealers, and a host of low-lifes—a place where the rules of civilized life no longer applied, crime went unpunished, and merchants had to barricade their property against nightly invasion with barbed wire, as if inhabiting the post-apocalyptic landscape of *Dawn of the Dead*. Homeless advocates had fought every effort to restore order with ceaseless lawsuits and antipolice propaganda.

But as Heather Mac Donald reports in our cover story, "The Reclamation of Skid Row" (page 14), the William Bratton–led LAPD's year-old Safer City Initiative has turned the neighborhood around by relentlessly applying the principles of Broken Windows, or order-maintenance, policing—at least where the lawsuits still allow it. Major felonies on Skid Row have fallen 42 percent over the first half of 2007, with murder down 75 percent and other indicators, such as drug overdoses, improving as well. (Similar results have flowed from Denver's turn to order-maintenance policing, observes Alec Magnet on page 100.)

You'd think Skid Row's crime drop would be cause for celebration. But not for the homeless industry, which is launching a new wave of spurious litigation that threatens to return the neighborhood to anarchy. It would be a tragedy if they succeeded. On the subject of misguided activism, the new Religious Left has become a powerful force over the last half-decade. Steven Malanga profiles the union-allied movement on page 76.

Across the Pacific, it may be time to ask: Will Carrie Bradshaw destroy Japan? In the fascinating "The New Girl Order" (page 26), Kay S. Hymowitz looks at the sudden globalization of the single young female. From Tokyo to Mumbai to Warsaw, more women than ever are going to college, moving to the city, and starting careers—and, as a result, delaying marriage and having fewer kids. The *Sex and the City* lifestyle of consumption and aspiration is exciting, and injects energy into economies across the planet, Hymowitz writes. But low fertility also means shrinking societies and, over time, weaker economies.

Peter Huber explores a different revolution—one of science and markets—in "Cherry Garcia and the End of Socialized Medicine" (page 36). Huber's theme is the new molecular medicine and its audacious mission to "tune" everything that makes us sick—or makes us tick. In affluent countries, most diseases originate in human chemistry. The new medicine is making that chemistry predictable and tractable in ways that will give us unprecedented personal control over our health—so much control that no one-price healthcare system will ever be able to cope. What will follow the end of the era of big government in health care? Predicts Huber: "Science will discover, competition will supply, patients will choose, and freedom will deliver better medicine and far better health, at lower cost, to many more people."

That England and Australia have been the U.S.'s staunchest allies in Iraq has led some to talk about the virtues of the "Anglosphere" in the fight against Islamic terror. In "An Anglosphere Future" (page 48), Christopher Hitchens weighs in. His argument: properly understood, as a source of ideas of liberty and democracy, the Anglosphere may indeed have a future. But Hitchens rejects imperial nostalgia and warns against confusing language with ethnicity. India is today's biggest English-speaking country, after all, and it has been fighting Islamists longer than we have. The war against jihadism can't be won on the terrain of Rudyard Kipling.

André Glucksmann would agree. One of Europe's leading political thinkers, Glucksmann has waged a 30-year battle for human rights, famously supporting Eastern European dissidents against Marxist totalitarianism and emerging in recent years as a fierce critic of Islamism and a rare French supporter of the Iraq War. In the mesmeric "From the H-Bomb to the Human Bomb" (page 56), he meditates on the radical evil of modern terrorism, which seeks to combine the annihilating power of Hiroshima with the "nihilist gospel" of Auschwitz. Facing such evil, defenders of freedom can't be complacent.

—Brian C. Anderson

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Soundings

A SLAPP Against Freedom

Attorneys have an effective new way to defeat Islamic groups' libel suits.

Nothing gets a journalist's attention like a subpoena. While authoritarian regimes silence critics by murdering or jailing them, journalists (and other critics) in the United States face gentler, but still effective, intimidation: libel lawsuits. Over the last few years, Islamists have tried silencing reporters, scholars, and citizens by suing them for defamation, often successfully. But recent legal cases in California, Massachusetts, and Minnesota suggest that the tactic may finally be backfiring, at least in the United States, if not in Britain, where libel laws overwhelmingly favor plaintiffs. The American lawsuits' outcomes—poorly covered by the media—represent victories for the free expression and public participation that the First Amendment guarantees.

The latest victory came in August, when an Islamic charity, KinderUSA, and its board chairman, Laila Al-Marayati, dropped the libel suit they had filed in April in California state court against former Treasury Department official Matthew Levitt, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (which now employs him), and Yale University Press. In 2006, Yale published Levitt's book on Hamas, which Washington says supports terrorism. Levitt never mentioned Al-Marayati in his book, but he did assert that KinderUSA, founded to raise money for Palestinian children, had ties to terrorist groups.

Al-Marayati and KinderUSA charged that Levitt had made "false and damaging" charges that caused "irreparable harm to its reputation," and they sought at least $500,000 in damages, a public retraction, and a halt to the book's distribution. But Levitt and his codefendants stood by his claims. In June, they filed a motion against the charity and its chairman, seeking to quash the libel suit and demanding that the plaintiffs pay all legal fees. They cited a California law that bans "SLAPP"—or "strategic litigation against public participation"—suits, which aim not at winning in court, but at intimidating into silence a group or a publication raising issues of public concern. "California enacted anti-SLAPP legislation to get rid of inappropriate lawsuits like this one," they wrote in a 15-page brief.

Less than six weeks later, Al-Marayati and KinderUSA dropped the suit. Todd Gallinger, who represented the plaintiffs, insisted that the charity had sued not to intimidate or silence Levitt, but rather to force him to correct charges that it still considers libelous. "They were trying to suppress the charity's legitimate activities," he said. But KinderUSA underestimated the costs involved, he acknowledged, and the defendants' anti-SLAPP motion was a factor in its decision to drop the suit.

"Anti-SLAPP laws are a very powerful tool," agreed Roger Myers, an attorney who specializes in using the law to defend journalists in libel claims. "There has been a fairly dramatic decline in the number of libel cases being filed here in California."

Levitt's case isn't unique. Last May, the Islamic Society of Boston dropped its suit against the *Boston Herald*, a local Fox news channel, journalist Steven Emerson, and 14 others. The Society had accused the defendants of libel and of infringing its civil rights by claiming that it had funded terrorist organizations, received money from Saudi Arabia, and bought land for a mosque below market value from the City of Boston.

Though Massachusetts's anti-SLAPP law does not cover media firms, ten of the non-media defendants filed a motion to quash the Society's suit. When a state judge rejected the motion, a legal discovery process got under way while the defendants appealed. Bank records and other documents revealed that, contrary to its claims, the Society had raised over $7 million from Saudi and other Middle Eastern sources and had funded two groups that the Bush administration has designated terrorist entities: the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development and the Benevolence International Foundation. Records also showed that Society directors had deleted all e-mails about the Society's land purchase. Finally, discovery revealed that the deputy director of the Boston city agency in charge of negotiating the land deal not only was a Society member whom it had paid to raise money in the Middle East, but also secretly advised the group

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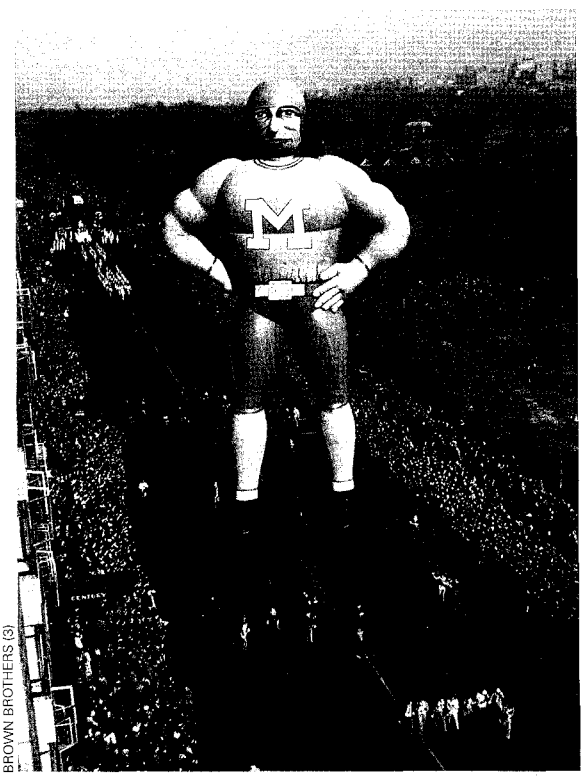
about obtaining the land cheaply—a clear conflict of interest.

On May 29, soon after the state appellate court heard arguments on the anti-SLAPP appeal, the Society abandoned the suit. Though its lawyers did not respond to requests for comment and its website tried to put a good face on the surrender, Jeff Robbins, who represented several defendants in the complex lawsuit, expressed their belief that the Society had caved, fearing the prospect of paying what could have been millions of dollars in court and legal fees. "The anti-SLAPP motion clearly played a role," said Robbins, who represented two clients for free because First Amendment issues were involved. Another factor, he said, was the Society's fear that the court would order it to answer questions under oath and release information that it had tried to keep secret, such as the names of its donors. The case shows that while anti-SLAPP legislation makes it somewhat easier, cheaper, and faster for those accused of libel to fight back, "it doesn't solve the problem entirely," said Jeff Hermes, a lawyer for the *Boston Herald*. "Media companies are not covered by our state's statute, and defendants in such cases still need to prepare a full defense."

In Minnesota, a third lawsuit didn't involve journalists or SLAPP statutes, but it did threaten citizens' right to petition or warn the government on public safety issues. It also prompted Congress to protect people retroactively who report suspicious behavior. The defendants were anonymous citizens whose complaints about what they considered suspicious behavior by six Muslim imams on a flight in late 2006 led US Airways to remove the clerics from the plane. In a 2007 federal lawsuit claiming discrimination, the imams sued the airline, the Minneapolis airport, and several of the passengers who had complained.

But in August 2007, the "flying imams" dropped all claims against the passengers after Congress approved legislation to protect passengers from retaliatory lawsuits for reporting potentially terror-related activity. Under the measure, as in an anti-SLAPP law, if the plaintiffs cannot prove that a passenger lied in his complaint to the government, they can be held responsible



BROWN BROTHERS (3)

for all court and legal fees. "The imams saw the handwriting on the wall," said Representative Peter King, the New York Republican who promoted the bill. Gerry Nolting, a lawyer who represented a passenger, also without a fee, said that the imams might never have filed their suit if Minnesota had on its books an anti-SLAPP law like California's.

However intimidating and expensive defamation lawsuits remain in the United States, the challenge is far greater in Britain, where journalists must prove that their allegations are true. Rachel Ehrenfeld, a New York–based terrorism researcher and the author of *Funding Evil*, is among more than 30 writers and publishers whom Saudi billionaire Khalid bin Mahfouz sued for libel in England for accusing him of ties to terrorist groups, a charge he denies. But rather than give him the apology, retraction, and $225,000 in fees that a British court ordered, Ehrenfeld, whose book was never even published in England, fought back. In 2004, she countersued bin Mahfouz in New York, asking

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Soundings

the federal court here to declare the judgment against her unenforceable in America and contrary to the First Amendment protections that Americans enjoy.

In June, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, overturning a lower court ruling, asked the state's highest court to determine whether bin Mahfouz should be subject to New York jurisdiction. If it rules affirmatively, Ehrenfeld would be able to obtain considerable information about his finances in preparing for a trial. If he then failed to cooperate, he might have difficulty doing business in America.

Ehrenfeld's effort comes none too soon, says Andrew McCarthy, a former federal prosecutor, for bin Mahfouz no longer needs to sue to intimidate his critics. After he merely threatened Cambridge University Press with a libel suit this spring, the prestigious publisher agreed to apologize on its website, pay his legal costs and unspecified damages, and stop distributing *Alms for Jihad*, a book written by J. Millard Burr, a former State Department analyst and relief coordinator, and Robert O. Collins, a former University of California history professor, which outlines bin Mahfouz's alleged financial support for terrorism. Cambridge also asked libraries to remove the book from their shelves. On its website, Cambridge states that it took such steps because "under English libel laws, we simply did not have a defensible case." A court victory for Rachel Ehrenfeld, and more anti-SLAPP statutes—only some 20 states have enacted such laws—would help curb the pernicious "libel tourism" so inimical to the free flow of information on which an informed citizenry and effective counterterrorism depend. —*Judith Miller*

Hispanic Voting Myths

The GOP has less to fear from a Latino backlash than some claim.

When President Bush's immigration-reform bill collapsed this past summer, torpedoed largely by objections from within his own party, open-borders advocates and media commentators warned that the GOP would pay a harsh political price for killing the bill. After all, their argument went, Hispanic support had been crucial in electing President Bush, and Hispanic voters represented a rising electoral tide that Republicans ignored at their peril. THE GOP MAY ERASE THE GAINS IT'S MADE WITH HISPANICS; HISPANIC VOTERS FLEX POLITICAL MUSCLE—headlines galore blared these and similar messages after the immigration legislation's defeat.

But such commentary is largely based on an inaccurate picture of the Hispanic voting public that emerged after the 2004 election and persists today. Shortly after the election, for instance, former Clinton pollster Dick Morris declared that Hispanics had elected Bush; they represented 12 percent of the electorate, he reasoned, and 45 percent of them had voted for the president, enough to decide a race that Bush won by about 3 million votes. Most stories since have followed this general theme.

The Hispanic vote for Bush was far from decisive, however, and it may be years before it plays a pivotal role in a national election. For one thing, Hispanics are a small portion of the voting public—far smaller than their percentage of the

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population—because many are ineligible to vote and even those who do qualify to vote often don't. Hispanics may represent about 14 percent of the U.S. population, but they actually constituted just 6 percent, not 12 percent, of the 2004 electorate—just 7.5 million voters out of 125 million. According to Census Bureau data, only 34 percent of America's adult Hispanics registered to vote in 2004, and just 28 percent voted. By contrast, 67 percent of the country's adult white, non-Hispanic population and 56 percent of its adult black population voted in 2004. Blacks, whom Hispanics have now surpassed as America's largest minority, outnumbered Hispanic voters nearly two to one in 2004.

The media have also exaggerated Bush's Hispanic support. Exit polls taken during 2004 showed a wide variation in Bush's share of the Hispanic vote, ranging from a high of 44 percent in some polls to a low of 33 percent. Most in the media have gone with the higher number. Yet subsequent academic studies have discredited it and have since estimated Bush's actual level of Hispanic support at somewhere between 35 percent and 37 percent. In this light, the "swing" of Hispanic voters from Bob Dole, the GOP's 1996 presidential candidate who garnered just 21 percent of their vote, to George W. Bush was hardly historic. Dole's candidacy represented a modern-day low-water mark for the GOP with Hispanic voters (and lots of other constituencies, too). In 1984, Ronald Reagan captured 37 percent of the Hispanic vote—a performance at least equal to Bush's. This suggests that the key to winning Hispanic votes may be running good candidates, not pandering. Hispanic voters themselves seem to be saying so: a 2004 *Washington Post* poll found that immigration was the *least* important issue among Hispanic voters, with only 3.5 percent placing it at the top of their concerns; 27 percent of the respondents named the economy and 20 percent terrorism as their biggest concern.

But so far, commentators have chosen to ignore historical voting patterns and to see everything in terms of immigration. They claim that the Hispanic backlash against Republicans' immigration policy began in the 2006 congressional election, because only 30 percent of Latino voters supported GOP candidates. But from 2004 to 2006, the GOP lost support among virtually *all* constituencies, including union members (down 10 percentage points) and white evangelicals (down 8 percentage points) for reasons that had nothing to do with immigration.

When facing up to the feeble national numbers, most observers claim that the Hispanic vote is still important in swing states where the Hispanic population concentrates, especially in an era of tightly contested national races. Thus, the "Hispanics flexing their political muscles" story presented readers with a list of swing states where the Hispanic population was large, such as Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico. But look more closely at the numbers in these states. In Arizona, though Hispanics make up 17 percent of the state's population (and 28 percent of voting-age adults), they constituted just 13 percent of voters in 2004. Bush, who won the state by 210,700 votes (including 127,000 from Hispanics), would not have lost Arizona even if his opponent, John Kerry, had won every Hispanic vote.

The Arizona vote points to another fallacy about Hispanic political power: namely, that a liberal immigration policy will win voters for the Republican Party, and not cost it any. In fact, polls suggest that Bush's immigration policy might cost more votes than it gains. Consider: in 2004, 78 percent of the Arizona electorate (1.74 million voters) told pollsters that immigration should either stay at current levels or decrease. One can only imagine how those voters would have reacted in the summer of 2004 if the president had introduced an immigration-reform bill similar to this summer's, which offered a path to citizenship for some 12 million illegals along with vastly expanded legal immigration slots in order to clear up the nation's backlog of visa applications.

Given what the voting numbers show us, it's unlikely that Hispanics will become an important voting bloc as soon as many predict. And by then, Hispanic citizens might find that an immigration policy based on enforcing borders and increasing the number of better-skilled immigrants, which many Republicans advocate, actually benefits them. For one thing, recent

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economic studies show that the country's current levels of immigration are hurting immigrants who are already here—and they hurt native-born Hispanics more than most U.S. residents. A saner immigration flow is likely to boost the average wages of our current Hispanic population and reduce the scramble for resources, such as housing, in heavily Hispanic communities.

But much of the commentary on Hispanic voting power tends to ignore such issues, focusing instead on Hispanic voters' supposed anger at Republicans and comparing it with black voters' desertion of the party after key Republicans opposed civil rights legislation in the 1960s. But the analogy hardly stands up. For one thing, American blacks were striving to obtain rights already guaranteed in the Constitution, but denied to them. By contrast, American Hispanics encounter no such widespread and organized discrimination. The current immigration debate is not about denying them anything, but about dealing with those now here illegally and those yet to come. —*Steven Malanga*

Brain Funding Drain

American universities are losing research money to overseas competitors.

In 1980, Congress passed the Bayh-Dole Act, which allowed universities to own intellectual property arising from federally financed research. The result was an explosion of innovation. The number of universities and colleges receiving patents more than doubled from 1983 to 2003; the number of patents awarded to schools grew by over 600 percent. Today, royalties from patents and licenses bring in millions of dollars for many academic institutions. And the universities' gains have redounded to the advantage of many regional economies, in the form of spin-off companies, jobs, and income growth.

To help move research discoveries into the marketplace, more than 200 universities have created offices of "technology transfer." Unfortunately, many of the offices have become ponderous bureaucracies. Worse still, seeking to maximize profits for the schools, they have frequently contravened contractual agreements to assert ownership over research that a company has sponsored and expects to profit from.

Businesses seem to be taking notice. Over the last 50 years, industry-funded basic research in universities generally had kept pace with all categories of R&D, even outstripping basic research performed in companies' own labs. And in the mid-1990s, with the explosion of transdisciplinary fields such as biotechnology, corporations began funding basic research at universities at a blistering pace: such investment grew 45 percent from 1995 to 2000, much faster than the growth of total R&D funding. But in 2000, industry abruptly reversed course. From 2001 to 2004, the most recent year for which data are available, corporate funding of basic research in American universities declined in each consecutive year—the longest period of contraction since data collection began. The contraction can't be explained by the economic slowdown of 2001–02; harsher periods of slow growth have seen industry-funded research at universities keep expanding.

The likeliest reason for this worrisome trend is that many companies are tired of haggling over intellectual property rights—and in a world of globalized R&D, they no longer have to. IBM, Hewlett-Packard, Baker Hughes, Intel, Texas Instruments, and Microsoft, to name just a few major firms on a growing list, are now shifting research funding to universities in England, India, Russia, and China, where they have access to top scientists and often face fewer intellectual property hurdles. A 2006 survey found that most global firms anticipated their R&D expansion to take place in China and India; by the end of this year, 31 percent of R&D employees worldwide will work in one of those two countries, up from 19 percent in 2004. As one corporate official observes: "Not only is the cost significantly less, there is no doubt that at the end of the day we own the intellectual product." A study published last year in *Science* found that the location of multinational R&D turns more heavily on the ease of collaboration with university faculty than on cost.

And make no mistake: universities abroad are eager for partnerships with American firms. In many fields, the technological edge appears to be

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shifting along with industry-supported research to foreign institutions such as the University of Beijing. "We went there for the cost, but we stay for the quality," says one American executive. One striking example is the rise of Siberia's "Silicon Forest," centered in Novosibirsk State University, where such firms as Intel, IBM, and Schlumberger have growing R&D investments.

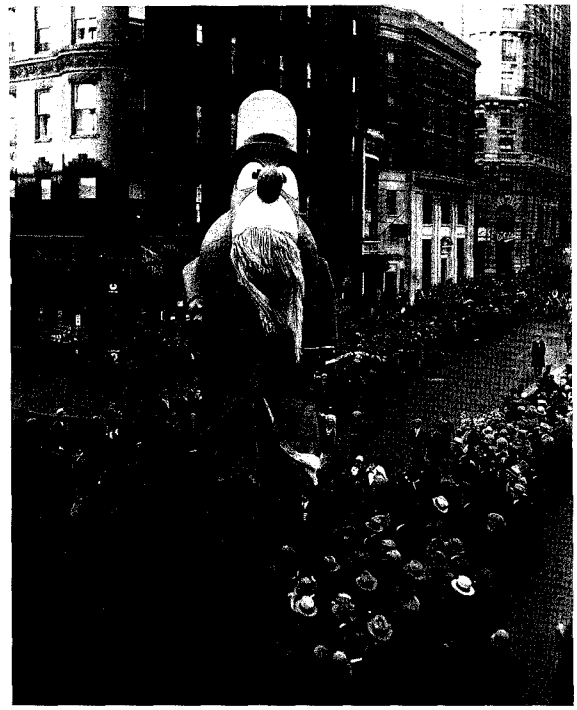
While the U.S. remains the leader in R&D and university science, its position may be slowly eroding. Universities don't bear full responsibility for this decline—other factors, such as restrictive immigration laws, have helped push research overseas—but their part in it is undeniable. And as the quality of universities in emerging economies increases, they may encourage an even greater migration away from American campuses.

It may be unwise, therefore, for regions to rely on universities as primary engines of growth and innovation. But local governments might pursue a strategy of urging universities to pool their commercialization efforts. As Bob Litan, William Baumol, and I have suggested in our recent book *Good Capitalism, Bad Capitalism*, "One of the reasons technology transfer offices fail to generate a profit for their universities . . . is that they can neither reach a size sufficient to realize economies of scale nor attract licensing and other personnel with expertise comparable to that available in the private sector." If a region's universities—at the very least, its public universities—were to combine their resources into a single technology transfer office, they might solve both problems. *—Carl J. Schramm*

False Prophet

Who's to blame for urban teacher flight: George W. Bush or Jonathan Kozol?

Jonathan Kozol has a new education book out, which means that he hasn't been eating. Kozol's books always come backed by a PR campaign portraying him as someone who courageously exposes the racism of America's inner-city public schools and even suffers physically alongside the people he writes about. For example, when *Amazing Grace*, Kozol's 1995 book about poor minority



kids trapped in lousy schools in the South Bronx, first appeared, the author had "lost 30 pounds and had begun suffering from asthma, like so many of the people who live" in the neighborhood, the *New York Times* reported.

With his new book, *Letters to a Young Teacher*—consisting of letters to a (possibly imaginary) first-grade Boston public school instructor—Kozol is again winning press plaudits, this time by actually fasting. In a glowing *Boston Globe* profile, columnist Sam Allis observed that Kozol "has been on a partial fast since the Supreme Court in late June all but banned voluntary school desegregation plans. His belt is working overtime to keep his pants up. I tell him he should eat." A few weeks later, though, Kozol's fans and friends received a somewhat different spin on the fast. In a Huffington Post article, Kozol described his refusal to eat solid food as a "personal act of protest" against George W. Bush's "racially punitive" No Child Left Behind education law. Kozol claimed to have shed 29 pounds so far.

Kozol's fast will have to go on for a long time if he's going to get public attention for this latest crusade, however. There's nothing

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particularly new or courageous about protesting against NCLB. A broad political coalition has formed—ranging from the National Education Association to state education superintendents—urging that NCLB be radically revised or scrapped altogether. Even conservative Republicans are jumping on the anti-NCLB bandwagon.

Still, nobody else has come up with anything as imaginative as Kozol's explanation of why NCLB is so awful for inner-city schools. In Kozol's view (and this is his new book's main theme), NCLB creates unbearable pressure in urban classrooms to pass the annual tests in reading and math that the law mandates. This results in a "miserable drill-and-kill curriculum of robotic 'teaching to the test,' " which is driving all the idealistic and well-educated young teachers out of the profession. "I didn't study all these years in order to turn black babies into mindless little robots, denied the normal breadth of learning, all the arts and sciences, all the joy in reading literary classics," Kozol's eponymous young teacher complains. Kozol asserts that 50 percent of all new teachers in urban school districts quit within five years because of the testing mandates.

The 50 percent attrition rate is approximately correct, and it's one of the most serious problems faced by urban schools. But how does Kozol know that NCLB is to blame? Well, Kozol says, he's heard from "hundreds of thousands" of quitting teachers (as he told WNYC radio host Leonard Lopate) who've expressed frustration with NCLB testing.

As it happens, though, reputable scholars such as Eric Hanushek, Stephen Rivkin, and Richard Murname have studied the urban attrition problem, and school districts have conducted exit surveys of new teachers leaving the job after less than five years. Contrary to Kozol's impression, testing hardly registers as a reason for leaving. One factor that does turn up, however, is the lack of adequate training that teachers get from education schools.

If ed schools aren't preparing future teachers for the reality of inner-city classrooms, what are they doing? Among other things, they're forcing students to read Jonathan Kozol's books, brimming with misinformation about the causes of school failure. A study by Hunter College School of Education dean David Steiner found that Kozol's books were among the most frequently assigned ed-school texts.

Like Kozol, I sometimes hear from teachers and prospective teachers. Here's what a student at NYU's Steinhardt School of Education recently wrote to me: "Essentially, Kozol is the foundation on which the Steinhardt program is built. He is introduced in . . . a freshman course that serves to elucidate current political debates concerning education. Unfortunately, there's pretty much no one on the syllabus to debunk him." And that's a pretty good explanation for why new teachers find themselves clueless when they step into urban classrooms. —*Sol Stern*

No Tearing Down This Wall

The Reagan diaries chronicle history but not personality.

In 1999, the acclaimed biographer Edmund Morris published his long-awaited life of Ronald Reagan. *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan* surprised Reagan friends and foes alike. The book was a partly fictionalized account of Reagan's life, complete with a narrator, "Edmund Morris"—not to be confused with the real Edmund Morris—and other fictional characters, some of whom interacted with real people in a baffling mix of history and artifice. Morris used these tactics, he said, to surmount his inability to penetrate the character of Reagan, a man who had presided over a momentous epoch and who had been, depending on whom you listened to, anything from a prime mover to a barely competent custodian making sure that the lights were on while history played out.

Morris's struggle to understand Reagan is even more perplexing in that, unlike almost all other presidents, the Gipper kept a daily diary of his time in office. Yet for Morris, who had early access, the diary yielded little insight into Reagan's inner world. Now the rest of us can take a crack at it: this spring, at long last, HarperCollins published a condensed version, edited by historian Douglas Brinkley, a biographer of both Jimmy Carter and John Kerry. HarperCollins

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will eventually publish the unabridged diaries in a multivolume set.

The diaries transport the reader back to when the Dow Jones index was below 1,000, few people owned PCs, and the Soviet Union seemed in it for the long haul. Reagan's descriptions of events are thin, as he passes from one event to the next, rarely stopping to reflect—though he also shows a deeper grasp of policy detail than many readers might expect. Throughout, his voice sounds exactly like the man Americans believed they knew, and this may be the most revelatory aspect of the book. As the diaries make clear, Reagan had what George Will called "a talent for happiness," and his wit and genial nature come through.

Reagan's dogged courage in the face of the Soviet threat also comes across consistently, though with relatively few dramatic entries. There are flashes of the wonderful Reagan anger, as when he chastises Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze on human rights in the run-up to his summit in Reykjavík with Mikhail Gorbachev. Otherwise, the sections on his summits with Gorbachev aren't particularly revealing. Likewise, Reagan throws little light on his difficult relationship with his children, but for the distance and mutual incomprehension with which they seemed to regard one another—best summarized in a rare moment of exasperation, when Reagan pens the diaries' most memorable line: "Insanity is hereditary—you catch it from your kids."

Though the diaries are fascinating history, readers may feel a twinge of sympathy for Morris. Reagan's political convictions are clear on every page, but the man himself usually eludes detection, except for his moving expressions of love for his wife, Nancy. Otherwise, little of the world truly seems to touch him, a trait that family, friends, and foes alike observed. Richard Pipes, who served on Reagan's National Security Council, saw the president as out of his depth in policy meetings, intellectually vapid, and personally remote. Yet Pipes also believed that Reagan had the instinct of great statesmen for "what matters and what does not."

Other politicians have had a tangled way with facts, or short attention spans. Both George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush have had an arm's-length relationship with the English language. Yet these traits do not present obstacles to understanding them comparable with Reagan's detachment. Detractors often confuse Reagan's personal opacity with political simplicity, and resist crediting him for the changes that his presidency ushered in. On that score, the evidence is against them, as historians not associated with conservatism, like John Patrick Diggins, have argued. Derek Leebaert, in his cold-war history *The Fifty-Year Wound*, puts it best: "It is beyond the laws of probability to believe that this was all coincidence or a matter of being lucky. . . . [Reagan's] lack of surface arrogance should not conceal his force of will, nor should his modesty in details obscure a confidence in his contribution to the heart of things such as only great men or fools possess. The hypothesis of foolishness becomes weaker by the day."

Nevertheless, the struggle to make sense of Reagan the man continues. Our contemporary bias is to probe the private man in an effort to understand what the public man does. Recent scholarship, for example, has tried to understand George Washington's inner life in order to reveal a man less remote and more accessible to our sensibilities—but Washington isn't terribly cooperative. Likewise, Reagan's inner world is nearly "unreadable," as the postmodernists would say. We're better off focusing elsewhere. In what Washington called "the great theater of Action"—in contrast with the dark corridors of personality—Reagan's character emerges clearly.

"Getting shot hurts," Reagan wrote after surviving John Hinckley, Jr.'s assassination attempt in 1981, exhibiting his persistent tendency toward understatement. So when he describes a 1982 swim in the Pacific Ocean at the actress Claudette Colbert's house, writing that "coming in was a chore against the undertow," one wonders whether he had just survived another near-death experience or merely had some vigorous exercise. Either way, the image of the swimmer coming in against the tide is fitting for his presidency: seemingly effortless accomplishment amid a nagging sense of mystery. How did Reagan do it? As Edmund Morris must know, great performers never tell. —*Paul Beston*

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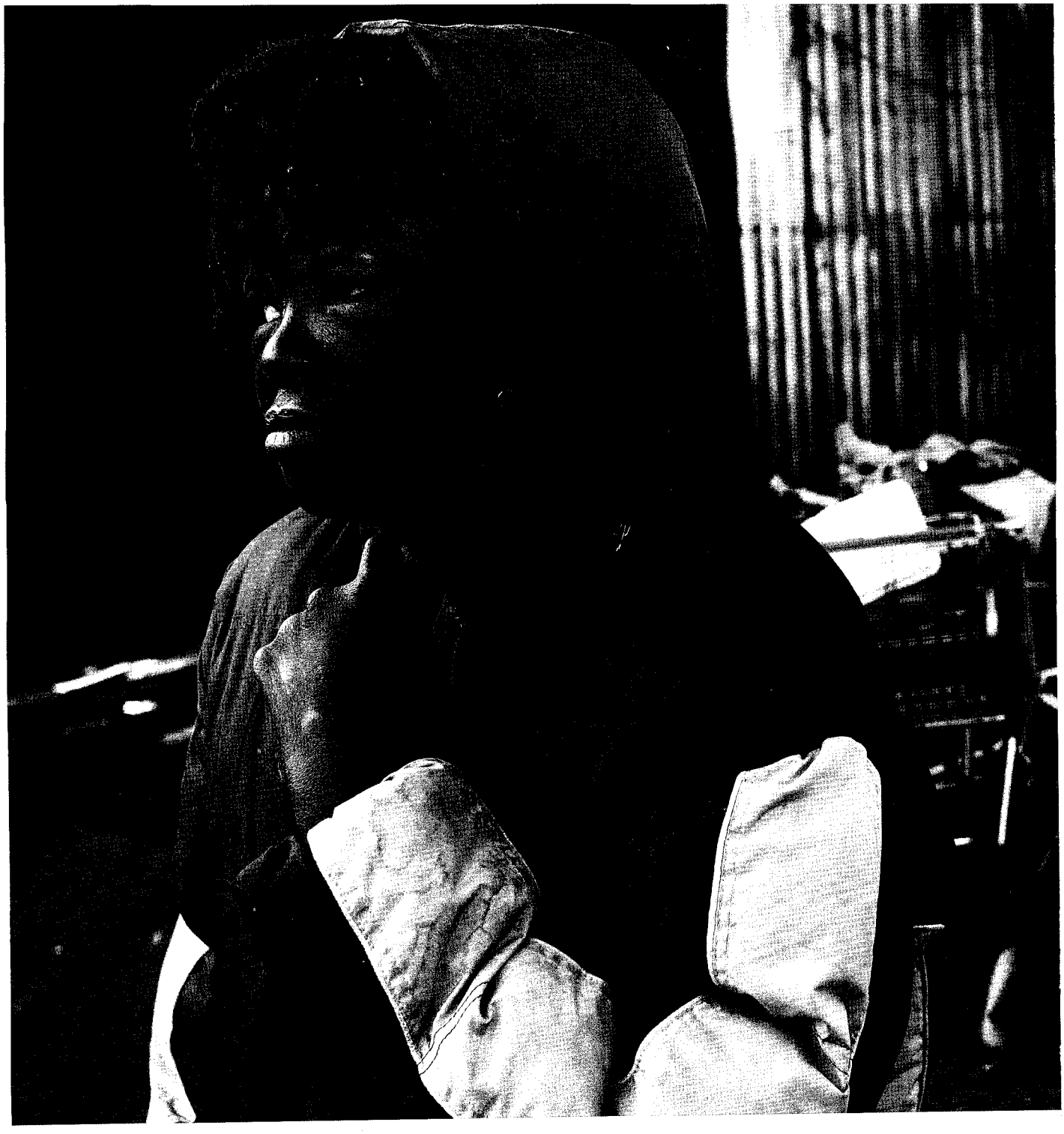
The Reclamation of Skid Row



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TED SOQUI/CORBIS

For 25 years, the homeless have dominated Skid Row.

The LAPD's efforts are reviving America's most squalid neighborhood—and the homeless industry is hopping mad.

Heather Mac Donald

Drive around Los Angeles's Skid Row with Commander Andrew Smith and you can barely go a block without someone's congratulating him on his recent promotion. Such enthusiasm is certainly in order. Over the last year, this tall, high-spirited policeman has achieved what for a long while seemed impossible: a radical reduction of Skid Row's anarchy. What is surprising about Smith's popularity, however, is that his fans are street-wizened drug addicts, alcoholics, and mentally ill vagrants. And in that fact lies a resounding refutation of the untruths that the American Civil Liberties Union and the rest of the homeless industry have used to keep Skid Row in chaos—until now.

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For 25 years, the advocates used lawsuits and antipolice propaganda to beat back every effort to restore sanity to Skid Row. They concealed the real causes of homelessness under a false narrative about a callous, profit-mad society that abused the less fortunate. The result: a level of squalor that had no counterpart in the United States. Smith's policing initiatives—grounded in the Broken Windows theory of order maintenance—ended that experiment in engineered anarchy, saving more lives in ten months than most homeless advocates have helped over their careers. The forces of lawlessness are regrouping, however, and Smith's successes may wind up reversed in a renewed attack on the police.

Before Smith's Safer City Initiative began in September 2006, Skid Row's 50 blocks had reached a level of depravity that stunned even longtime observers. Encampments composed of tents and cardboard boxes covered practically every inch of sidewalk. Their 1,500 or so occupants, stretched out in lawn chairs or sprawled on the pavement, injected heroin and smoked crack and marijuana in plain view, day and night. Feces, urine, and drug-resistant bacteria coated the ground. Even drug addicts were amazed at the scene. Fifty-year-old Vicki Williams arrived from Las Vegas in December 2005 with a heavy habit. "I couldn't believe what I was seeing: people getting high on the streets like it was legal," she says. "Down here was like a world of its own. Anything you can imagine I've seen: women walking down the street buck naked, people stabbed in front of me."

The human chaos hid entrenched criminal networks. The biggest heroin gang in downtown Los Angeles operated from the area's west end, using illegal aliens to peddle dope supplied by the Mexican Mafia. Able-bodied dealers sold drugs from wheelchairs and from tents color-coded to signal the wares within. Young Bloods and Crips from Watts's housing projects battled over drug turf and amused themselves by robbing the elderly.

A pitiless law of the jungle ruled social relations. "Everyone is out for himself out there," says Ken Williams (no relation to Vicki), a 50-year-old recovering drug user and ten-year veteran of the streets. "If people see a weakness, they will go for it." Officer Deon Joseph, who has dedicated himself to bringing safety to Skid Row, calls up on his computer recent photos recording the area's still-not-fully suppressed violence: facial welts on a homeless woman assaulted by a homeless man while she was drunk and sleeping on Gladys Street; red gashes across a man's back from a rake wielded by gangsters. In May 2006, a mentally ill woman who had repeatedly resisted offers of housing and services was stomped to death by a homeless parolee. That night, 82 shelter beds were available on Skid Row; a business improvement district's homeless outreach team could persuade only two people to accept them.

Nonviolent crime also metastasized on Skid Row, fed by government welfare. General relief payments—California's little-copied welfare program for able-bodied childless adults—arrive early in the month, followed a few days later by federal Supplemental Security Income for drug addicts and the mentally ill. Skid Row's population and partying spiked around check days. When the money was gone, smoked away in crack pipes or injected into veins, the hustling began. A doctors' clinic in the Hispanic MacArthur Park neighborhood sent a van out to collect volunteers for Medicaid fraud; it offered $20 to anyone willing to take a fake health exam, and then billed the exams to the government at exorbitant rates. Two food-stamp rings, paying homeless recipients 50 cents for every dollar's worth of stamps, stole $6 million from federal taxpayers. The spending money handed out in these scams went right back into the drug trade, keeping the homeless addicted and the drug sellers in diamond tooth caps.

This lawlessness hurt Skid Row's law-abiding residents the most. The area's century-old residential hotels and missions house thousands of senior citizens, non-drug-abusing mentally ill persons, and addicts trying to turn their lives around. "The people we serve are very vulnerable," says Anita Nelson, director of a government-funded nonprofit that rehabilitates and manages single-room-occupancy hotels (SROs). "The elderly and the mentally ill were victimized

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by the crime and the dealers. When you're afraid to go into the park, you're a prisoner in your 120-square-foot unit." Temptation confronted recovering addicts every time they stepped outside.

With formal controls on behavior almost completely absent, the last vestiges of civility broke down. In 2005, young volunteers for the Union Rescue Mission set out to deliver 4,000 boxes of Christmas food to every SRO in the area. As they tried to navigate the streets, encampment residents cursed them, hurled racial taunts, and mockingly defecated in front of them. The area's intrepid businesses faced constant assault. "We had to fortify the buildings with razor wire and barricade ourselves in," a shrimp processor recalls. "The homeless would take or steal anything." His roll-up door, constantly exposed to bodily fluids, rotted away. In September 2006, the owner of one of the district's landmark businesses, ABC Toys, caught a typical moment on film: a mail carrier reaches through the store's gate to drop off letters, when she notices that the man at her feet is shooting heroin into a prominent vein. She flees in dismay without leaving the mail.

"'We had to fortify the buildings with razor wire and barricade ourselves in,' a shrimp processor recalls."

This ugly scene was not the by-product of economic dislocations or of social upheaval; it was the consequence of a destructive ideology that turned a seedy neighborhood for the down-and-out into a hell.

Skid Row began as a vital accessory to what was once Los Angeles's thriving heart, decades before the automobile spread the city across hundreds of square miles to the mountains and ocean. Farmland surrounded what is now downtown, requiring workers for the fields, for the adjacent factories that processed the produce, and for the railroad that shipped it out. Skid Row's cheap hotels, saloons, and theaters catered to these transient single males.

Though this low-rent district was located just a few blocks from the elegantly sculpted banks and office buildings of Spring Street and Broadway, the two worlds coexisted in relative peace because public order was maintained. Over the course of the twentieth century, Skid Row's population became older and more disabled by alcoholism, as industrial and agricultural jobs moved elsewhere. The local missions tried to reclaim lives lost to drink, offering a free meal in exchange for attendance at a sermon, but their success rate was never particularly high. Alcoholics congregated on the street in bottle gangs—a group of drinkers who pooled their nickels for booze. Still, if one collapsed at a business's front door, he stood a good chance of getting picked up by the police for public inebriation.

But in the 1960s, laws against public intoxication, vagrancy, and loitering came under attack in court and in the press, and by the 1980s, the enforcement of such public-order statutes had all but ceased. In 1975, approximately 50,000 arrests took place in Los Angeles for public intoxication, more than half of those on Skid Row; in 1985, the entire city generated only 4,000 such arrests. This enforcement halt was not the humanitarian advance that its architects claimed, says Clancy Imislund, the former director of Skid Row's Midnight Mission and an ex–Skid Row alcoholic himself. "The police picked up street drunks for their own protection," he notes. "Sometimes they sent them to a farm north of L.A. for six months. By the 1970s, however, the police started leaving them lying there, where gangs took their money and beat the hell out of them." A 1971 federal law tried to substitute rehabilitation for the policing cycle, but the success rate of federally funded alcoholism services wasn't noticeably better than that of the jails, according to sociologist Ronald Miller.

One further change in the legal landscape paved the way for the chaos that would engulf

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Skid Row by the century's end. Inspired partly by the then-fashionable belief that mental illness was an artificial construct for oppressing nonconformists, California passed landmark legislation in 1967 that virtually ended the involuntary commitment of the mentally ill. A decade later, hospital professionals were noticing with alarm that patients whom they had no power to hold for long-term treatment were cycling between the streets, jails, and short-term mental wards.

By the early 1980s, a new Skid Row population had emerged: drug addicts, overwhelmingly black, often mentally ill, who camped out on the streets. The era of the "homeless" had begun. This population was younger, more hostile, and more predatory than the old Skid Row rummies were; it brought in its train a criminal element that hadn't previously existed downtown. "In the seventies, I'd rather have my daughter walk through Skid Row than on Hollywood Boulevard," recalls Imislund. "Some of the alcoholics slept outside because they didn't want to clean up. They may have looked dangerous, but they weren't." The "homeless" were a different matter. Local crime jumped 28 percent in 1986 alone. "I started with my mommy and daddy 50 years ago; it was not this bad, uh-uh," says Rosy Rios, who runs a ministry in the area. "All [the older Skid Row alcoholics] did was drink they wine and talk about what they did in France. Now they all into they heroin. This place is running all the time. . . . Most of these guys are sex offenders. This is the place you can hide away."

An Urban Land Institute study warned in 1987 that the "invasion of the homeless" was threatening the older SRO population and local businesses; stronger police protection was essential, argued the institute. The recommendation failed to take into account a second new population invading Skid Row: homeless advocates. Some of the same groups that had challenged public-order laws and pushed for the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill now seized on the resulting homeless for a host of ends, including a right to housing and further restrictions on the police. A made-for-the-media "tent city" erected by sundry homeless advocates outside City Hall in December 2004, for example, sought to end workfare and job-search requirements for welfare recipients—measures that had nothing to do with why people were on the streets.

A third new population sprang up around Skid Row, however, that would repeatedly clash with the homeless advocates over public safety: immigrant entrepreneurs. The eastern section of downtown adjacent to Skid Row, known as Central City East, had retained some food-processing and cold-storage businesses from the days of the ranchos, but most of its warehouses and factories were abandoned. In the late 1970s, a lone Chinese family spotted potential in the area, with its dense network of freeways leading to the Southland's ports and airports. Charlie Woo and his three brothers started a toy import-export business, and encouraged customers to become competitors by leasing space in the Woos' newly acquired warehouses. "People thought we were crazy to enter this blighted area and then to promote competition," says Shu Woo, one of the brothers, "but we wanted to create a gravitational center that would draw customers in." Today, the Woos' several multimillion-dollar toy companies are surrounded by about 500 other toy, electronics, and novelty enterprises, which generate nearly $1 billion in annual sales.

Other new downtown business districts formed in the 1980s—a fish-processing industry, flower wholesalers, and a fashion district—creating a fascinating array of small, pastel-colored stucco facilities under the bright California sky. As Los Angeles slipped into recession in the early 1990s, Central City East enjoyed one of the best growth rates in the city—and achieved it against enormous odds. Residents of the sidewalk encampments defecated on the new enterprises' doorsteps, set up heroin-shooting galleries outside, and jeered owners' efforts to clean up the sidewalks. Only the most intrepid employees were willing to work there. Many prospective hires, arriving for job interviews, simply drove on by.

The city government did little to nurture these pioneering entrepreneurs and usually opposed

DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP PHOTO

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To help area businesses, the LAPD asks the homeless to pack up their belongings at dawn.

their interests in favor of the burgeoning homelessness complex. Periodically, the anguish of Central City East's employers and workers would inspire a local police captain to try to bring order to the streets, but the efforts always proved short-lived.

In 1987, for example, Police Chief Daryl Gates announced plans to enforce the city's defunct ordinance against sleeping, lying, or sitting on the sidewalk, setting off a firestorm within Mayor Tom Bradley's administration and outside of it. Actor Martin Sheen penned an op-ed for the *Los Angeles Times* yoking the sidewalk law to America's "useless nuclear arsenal" and worldwide starvation. Gates received "stinging letters," he says, from the West Side, Los Angeles's sylvan enclave for Hollywood moguls and other titans. "I told the writers, 'If you want the homeless to pitch a tent, I'll give them your address. If you're so anxious, let them camp in Brentwood.' " No one took him up on the suggestion.

Gates's enforcement effort resulted in a 20 percent crime drop in the first month and a total cessation of homicides over two months—a "world record for us," according to a local commander. The city had passed out housing vouchers to anyone who would take them *and* created a tent city where people could get assistance with jobs (almost no one accepted the job offers). Nevertheless, the sidewalk policing initiative fell before elite opinion. Lawlessness returned to Skid Row.

A pattern in the advocates' efforts soon emerged: the more the government and philanthropy spent on helping the homeless, the louder the charge that nothing was being done. By now, public and private entities have spent $350 million on homeless housing downtown without quieting the activists.

In 1999, the doyenne of downtown homeless agitators, Alice Callaghan, picketed the opening of a Skid Row drop-in center providing people with showers, a place to sit or lie down, and various services that would start them on the

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path to rehabilitation. Callaghan, an ex-nun and ordained Episcopal priest, likened the 24-hour facility to an "internment camp." The problem? A drop-in center reinforces the idea that "anyone still on the street is on the street by choice and not because of a lack of options," she told *Mother Jones* magazine in 2001. "The language of rehab and programs and community is the velvet glove on a puritanical and punitive fist," she added.

The exertions of the homelessness industry long ago passed into the realm of the surreal. Estela Lopez, director of Skid Row's business improvement district, the Central City East Association (CCEA), had to negotiate in a judge's chambers the arcane question of whether feces in a plastic bag constitute "property." Defending the property label were lawyers from the prestigious law firm Morrison & Foerster, who, along with the ACLU, had sued CCEA over its efforts to remove encampment detritus from the sidewalks in front of members' businesses.

On Skid Row, such efforts at cleanliness take on titanic significance. In 2006, CCEA concluded that its usual street sweeping couldn't keep up with the area's filth and disease. To help business owners fulfill their legal obligation to keep the sidewalks in front of their properties clean, the association would hire a power-cleaning truck to wash the pavement. (The resulting runoff was anticipated to be so toxic that CCEA also paid to vacuum it up before it poured into the storm drains.) The association sent out notices for two days in advance, asking encampment residents to pack their possessions up during the operation, after which they would be free to return to the same spot on the sidewalk.

Abuse! cried the advocates, who showed up en masse to protest. Sidewalk cleaning was another tactic, they said, in the "criminalization of homelessness," a ubiquitous slogan used to discredit any effort to apply rules and laws evenhandedly in areas colonized by vagrants. A member of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker movement lay down under the cleaning truck to block its advance. "If you see street cleaning in any other neighborhood, you don't see [a] police presence," groused Becky Dennison of the Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA Can). Dennison is right: police don't routinely accompany street cleaners elsewhere. But only on Skid Row have psychotic drug addicts, whom the police have been prevented from removing to safer quarters, been known to attack the workers.

When Police Chief William Bratton took control of the LAPD in late 2002, vowing to clean crime out of Skid Row through the application of Broken Windows policing, the ACLU launched a litigation war to stop him. For the advocates, the stakes had never been higher. A few developers had started converting empty office buildings in adjacent areas of downtown to lofts; the activists seized on this revitalization of Los Angeles's historic core as proof that the evil capitalists were seeking to afflict the poor. In March 2003, the ACLU filed a lawsuit against the department's efforts to track down the hundreds of violent parole violators and absconders in Skid Row encampments who were driving up violent crime. And in an even more ambitious lawsuit, *Jones* v. *City of Los Angeles*, the ACLU charged that application of the city's ordinance against sleeping or lying on the sidewalk violated the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. The majority of a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals panel agreed in April 2006, and the police halted their mostly desultory efforts to enforce the sidewalk law. The ACLU handed out leaflets on the *Jones* decision to encampment residents, some of whom waved them tauntingly in police officers' faces. Skid Row got worse than anyone could have imagined.

Enter Andrew Smith. He had become captain of Central Division, the police jurisdiction responsible for Skid Row, in April 2005, determined to "change the culture of chaos," as he put it. Smith had no doubt that the anarchy did not represent an unavoidable consequence of poverty, as the advocates alleged. "People were here because they chose not to conform to ordinary standards of behavior and the laws of the land," he says.

Smith's ambitions required a lot of additional officers. The area represented the "granddaddy of all order maintenance problems," says Chief Bratton. The department's perennial manpower

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shortage, however, as well as the ongoing litigation over police power, forced Smith to put his plans on hold. Instead, he organized a demonstration project for Main Street, where a homeless colony was strangling a nascent commercial and residential rebirth. Smith assigned existing officers to foot beats, put up security cameras, and started enforcing the narcotics laws and, to a very limited extent, the ordinance against sleeping on the sidewalk. The encampments disappeared; legitimate street life arose in its place.

The advocates struck back. Officer Lenny Davis walks Main Street; like all Skid Row cops, he often has a shadow. LA Can, the most radical antipolice outfit on Skid Row, sends out its members to film the police. Davis never knows when a videographer will trail him, or when a specious complaint, filed by someone coached by the activists, might hit him. "Our back is against the wall," he says in frustration. "We don't know what to do to make them stop making complaints." Yet despite thousands of hours of accumulated tape, LA Can has yet to publicize any footage showing the police abuse that it and the ACLU allege is so common.

Finally, in September 2006, Smith got the additional officers he needed. A graphic series on Skid Row by a *Los Angeles Times* columnist in late 2005 and a widely publicized video of a hospital ambulance abandoning a mentally ill patient to the streets gave Bratton the political cover to assign an entire graduating class of 50 new recruits to the area. Crucial support came from the city attorney and the local councilwoman, both of whom bucked Los Angeles political traditions to fight for sanity in Central City East. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa broke with his own past as president of the ACLU of Southern California to back the cleanup. Even though the ACLU litigation was still tying the city up in legal knots, Chief Bratton signaled the go-ahead for the Safer City Initiative (SCI).

> **"Abuse! the advocates cried. Sidewalk cleaning was another tactic in the 'criminalization of homelessness.'"**

Four mornings a week, Safer City squads blanket Skid Row's most intractable blocks. Much of their effort targets quality-of-life issues—discouraging public drinking and littering, stopping sales of counterfeit merchandise, nabbing illegal dumpers. "The key to SCI is perception," Smith says. "Do people feel comfortable coming down here? We talk to the homeless and ask them what still needs to be done." When SCI began, the sanitation department was picking up six tons of trash dumped illegally on the streets every day; by August 2007, that amount was down to two tons. Some of that garbage comes from misguided do-gooders, who hourly drive into the neighborhood to unload bags of clothing and unneeded food onto the sidewalk before making as fast a getaway as possible. "If I see one more plate of salad next to someone's turd, I'll kill someone," laments a City Hall aide who has worked to clean up the area.

Because of the *Jones* litigation, the police department allows nighttime encampments but asks people to pack up their belongings in the morning. Despite the brouhaha over sidewalk enforcement, the department has arrested only a handful of the most recalcitrant campers who set up in front of restaurants or new businesses and refuse to leave. Every one of those arrestees—if he has no recent history of violence—gets the option of shelter and services as an alternative to jail, as is true of every other misdemeanor offender on Skid Row. But few of them qualify, since most have violent records; even fewer accept the services; and a vanishingly small number complete the 21-day alternative to jail time.

Yet the mere possibility of enforcement has had a major effect. In September 2006, there were 1,876 people sleeping on the street and 518 tents; in early June, there were 700 people and 315 tents. "We've broken the back of the problem," says Bratton. "We're controlling

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behavior with the ability just to move people along. You need to interrupt the cycle where they never leave and collect mountains of stuff in a very short time." The police no longer find dead bodies in the tents, rotting unnoticed for days or weeks.

Measured by crime statistics alone, the Safer City Initiative's results have been remarkable. Major felonies on Skid Row plummeted 42 percent in the first half of 2007, the largest decrease in all of Los Angeles. There were 241 fewer victims of violent crime in that period. In downtown as a whole, the murder rate dropped over 75 percent. This crime drop has coincided with the decline in the street population, suggesting that the encampment dwellers weren't engaged exclusively in "life-sustaining activities," as the majority in the *Jones* decision foolishly put it. But other markers of social progress have improved as well. Drug overdose and natural deaths were down over 50 percent through June 2007; emergency medical incidents requiring EMS response were down 17 percent.

The Safer City Initiative has also worked with stepped-up narcotics enforcement. The increased arrests under SCI allowed the police to move up the organization chart of the ruthless Fifth and Hill heroin gang, which operated out of Skid Row; SCI cameras caught the license numbers of Fifth and Hill middlemen, leading to the crucial March 2007 takedown of gang kingpins.

Though the advocates refuse to budge from their untruths about police abuse of the homeless, the homeless themselves know better. If the Safer City Initiative were in fact the travesty that the elite cop-haters claim, the reception that Commander Smith and his officers get when they travel the streets of Skid Row would be far different from the love fest that currently greets them.

As Smith drives down Fifth Street, a toothless man shouts out: "Hey, man!" and walks up to Smith's squad car to give him a fist-to-fist handshake. "Where are you?" the elderly alcoholic asks. "I'm everywhere, Larry," Smith responds. Larry mumbles something about Smith's recent promotion from captain to commander, and concludes, "Way to go, Smith!" Farther down the block, another bedraggled man leaves his post at a wall and accosts Smith: "How's your father doing?" he asks. Smith spots another acquaintance. "Mr. Jackson! Hello, Mr. Jackson. How many watches you got on?" Mr. Jackson presents his scrawny wrist: "I got on four," he replies proudly. You can't get far on Skid Row without encountering a young woman with sunburned cheeks, pale eyes, and deeply chapped lips, who spends her days circling the area. She flags Smith's car down. "Hey, how you been?" she asks, slurring her words. The two engage in a surreal exchange about the woman's pet white mouse, which she concludes by volunteering: "I'm going to stay on drugs for a while."

There are several things to notice about Smith's interactions. First, many of his greeters should be receiving mental health care but are too ill to seek it. The police would love to secure them that assistance but cannot, thanks to the advocates' ongoing campaign against involuntary commitment. In fact, when officers call an ambulance to help deranged and severely ill people get physical care, chances are that LA Can's cameras will switch on, accompanied by charges of "harassing the homeless." Second, unlike the advocates, Smith knows the names of the homeless, because he has spent so much time trying to improve their lot by enforcing standards of behavior and getting rid of the criminals in their midst. Third, if Smith's officers were acting thuggishly, Smith wouldn't enjoy such a procession of goodwill.

But no need to work from inferences. It's easy enough to observe the cops themselves doing their work. Deon Joseph has devoted the last nine years of his life to fighting the forces of lawlessness on Skid Row, a battle he records eloquently on the LAPD blog. As this massively muscled, low-key officer ambles down San Julian Street, once the heart of Skid Row decadence, he encounters a pretty young woman with a bike. "I've been avoiding you," she says sheepishly. Joseph had put her into a housing program, but she absconded. "When I was in the program, it added value to my life. I had a TV, a DVD player, but I got bored." Joseph inquires if she has drugs on her and asks to see her fingertips,

HECTOR MATA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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Top cop William Bratton's Safer City Initiative has helped reduce Skid Row's homeless population by more than half.

which tell whether someone is using crack cocaine or selling it. "I'm going to give you a second chance," he says. "If you see me on the street—and this is real—don't be afraid to holler on me, because I know people make mistakes."

A string of elderly ladies in wheelchairs are drinking out of paper bags. In response to Joseph's question about the contents of her bag, a senior citizen with three nose rings replies: "I ain't drinking no beer, I'm drinking whisky. You caught me slippin'." Joseph takes a beer from a man's hand and pours it out. "There's no drinking in public on my block. It's how I keep crime down." The drinkers accept this intervention without protest.

The people who would most benefit from observing this complex web of formal authority and personal connectedness are L.A.'s liberal judges, who demonstrate complete ignorance about how the police operate in a community like Skid Row. Officers' rapport with addicts and the mentally ill has no counterpart in the anti-cop bar and its supporters. Only the police are out there every day, trying to nudge people who have fallen out of normal society back into it, and putting themselves (and their families) at risk of infectious disease in doing so. The cops know the rhythms of the sidewalk: that people lying there in 110-degree heat are selling dope, or crashing from a cocaine binge, or drinking, not enduring the unjust conditions of poverty.

Officer Joseph passed out hundreds of flyers for work at a Long Beach plant. A mere four people sought jobs there; the rest preferred to stay on welfare. Still, he's currently negotiating with the owners of a massive downtown development project, L.A. Live, for additional job offers. Joseph spends hours away from his family writing police reports to educate judges and district attorneys about the connections between street disorder and crime. "I put in everything I

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know, and then in several minutes they plead it out," he says wearily.

As the Safer City Initiative progresses, the advocates of disorder are running scared. "Today, Skid Row's streets are strangely empty," opined Ramona Ripston, the executive director of the ACLU of Southern California, in April 2007. Actually, what was "strange" was the chaos that had engulfed them just months previously. And so the homeless activists are preparing what they hope will be the deathblow to SCI, and to the Broken Windows theory behind it.

For this final push, the unreality of antipolice propagandizing has reached record levels. A new lawsuit against the police filed by Carol Sobel, an attorney who has made a career of suing the police for the ACLU and the National Lawyers Guild, charges that low-income Skid Row residents have become prisoners in their own homes because of a police "war" against them. Sheer nonsense. It was the drug carnival before SCI that held Skid Row's law-abiding tenants hostage in their apartments; the dismantling of that free-for-all has liberated the hard-working poor, the elderly, and the infirm to use the area's public spaces. And many of the people who remain on the streets want more policing, not less. Jimmy, a middle-aged convict from Alabama with a self-confessed "violent temper," says he has "seen a lot of things change" since getting out of prison in 2003 for attempted murder. As he stands on San Julian Street with a group of other loafers on a hot August afternoon, he observes: "There's less crime, women are not getting harassed the way they used to." But Jimmy has some advice for the police: "They need to be here in the middle of the month; they are missing some things that are going on." As for Sobel's charge that no one dares use the streets for fear of the police, the most cursory tour through Skid Row reveals that, though the worst of the encampments are gone, plenty of people—like Jimmy—feel perfectly safe to loiter all day and night on the sidewalks.

A parallel ACLU lawsuit repeats the false claim that the police have a policy of stopping and violently searching people for no reason at all. One of the area's fiercest police foes has unwittingly refuted this claim. Casey Horan, director of a facility for the mentally ill, told the *Los Angeles Times* in August 2006 that 90 percent of the people on the street were engaging in misdemeanor crime. Far from harassing innocent people, in other words, the police ignore the vast majority of violations on Skid Row, which occur nonstop. The accusations against the police that the ACLU solicited for its suit from street people, often unnamed, are absurd on their face. They are contradicted in the record by numerous other homeless individuals and service providers testifying to compassionate, lawful police behavior. "The LAPD contacts me several times a day," says a six-year resident of the Gladys Street sidewalk. "They ask me how I'm doing and if I am okay. They are my friends and they are good to me." Yet a federal judge, Dean Pregerson, has already ruled provisionally in favor of the ACLU on the flimsiest of grounds.

What may be the most lethal assault on Skid Row policing, however, is only now revving up. For months, UCLA law professor Gary Blasi pelted Commander Smith with demands for all e-mails, transcripts, and supervisory notes relating to SCI, as well as for reams of police data. (The demands stopped only when Smith told Blasi that he'd have to come to Central Division and make copies of the material himself, because officers were spending too much time on his requests.) Blasi is preparing to charge that the enforcement of misdemeanor laws on Skid Row is discriminatory and ineffective. A centerpiece of his argument is that, as of summer 2007, the SCI squads had made only 16 arrests for violent crime. Therefore, Blasi's reasoning goes, they're not targeting real crime but merely trying to "ethnically cleanse" downtown to make way for gentrification.

Blasi's complaint strikes at the heart of the Broken Windows theory, for he is attacking the validity of going after low-level lawlessness, such as public drinking or graffiti, to reduce crime and the fear of crime. For the advocates, observes Chief Bratton, "any arrest that isn't for a felony is per se harassment." But the enforcement of laws relating to civil behavior—mostly

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through warnings, rather than arrests or citations—has been essential to undercutting the identity of Skid Row as a place beyond ordinary rules of human conduct. Says Officer Joseph: "The idea that because people were homeless, they had a right to break 'minor' laws . . . has led to nothing but death, disease, and despair." Equally important, misdemeanor enforcement has driven away drug dealers, who can no longer hang out all day, littering and jaywalking.

Sadly, the influential are listening to Blasi. *Los Angeles Times* columnist Steve Lopez, whose 2005 series on Skid Row galvanized the city, wrote a Blasi-inspired column in August denouncing the enforcement of jaywalking laws on Skid Row. Lopez quoted President George W. Bush's homelessness "czar," Philip Mangano, who ludicrously called Safer City "shameful," based on no knowledge of Skid Row or of the police's efforts to salvage it. Blasi's research has also made waves among Mayor Villaraigosa's aides at City Hall. L.A.'s crime drop—including that of Skid Row—stands as the sole accomplishment of the scandal-plagued mayor's administration, but Villaraigosa's advocate roots may yet prove a stronger lure.

"'It's unending,' says a city attorney. 'We don't have 500 attorneys to put on these ACLU attacks.'"

The city's policymakers should be under no illusions: if they dismantle the Safer City Initiative, the only people they'll help are drug dealers and other street criminals. SCI has improved the lot of Central City East's workers, of course, but the greatest beneficiaries have been the homeless. "The police have really improved things," explains street habitant Kharo Brown. "The crack is thinning out. It is getting really hard to find. Crack doesn't have a conscience. These people do crazy things on crack"—including attacking Brown. More subtly, Commander Smith and his officers have changed the area's culture. This year, for instance, when volunteers delivered Christmas food baskets to every poor SRO tenant, street residents didn't harass them.

The Safer City Initiative is about not poverty but behavior. "I don't care if 125 people are hanging out on San Julian if they are obeying the law," says Deon Joseph. Nor is it about lack of housing. The advocates will deny to their last breath the reality of "shelter resistance"—that is, the refusal of vast numbers of the homeless to take advantage of shelter and other housing options. The advocates have crafted a host of logical sophistries to dismiss the phenomenon, which anyone can test for himself by offering the homeless a place for the night or by asking the formerly homeless why they didn't get off the streets. Here's what you'll hear: "I didn't want help because I didn't want to conform to the rules," in the words of Ken Williams, who came from Long Beach to Skid Row a decade ago to indulge his crack and alcohol habit.

The inevitable next lawsuit will be a terrible waste of resources. "It's unending," says a city attorney. "We don't have 500 attorneys to put on these ACLU attacks." Regardless of the outcome of the suit, it will slow down the progress made to date. "Every time we get sued, it sets us back," says Joseph. "It makes officers unsure of what they can do and creates confusion where criminals fester."

Skid Row is hardly a paradise. There are still sights that you would never see elsewhere in the city; apart from the devoted businesses, it remains in some ways a world apart. Spend time there and you start to wonder which is real: the world of responsibilities fulfilled and discipline adhered to, or the world where you can watch months and years go by from a perch on the pavement. Yet the overall improvement of Skid Row is one of the greatest vindications to date of the power of policing to improve lives. It would be a tragedy if the advocates succeeded in reversing that success.

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The New Girl Order

The Carrie Bradshaw lifestyle is showing up in unexpected places, with unintended consequences.

Kay S. Hymowitz

After my Lot Airlines flight from New York touched down at Warsaw's Frédéric Chopin Airport a few months back, I watched a middle-aged passenger rush to embrace a waiting younger woman—clearly her daughter. Like many people on the plane, the older woman wore drab clothing and had the short, square physique of someone familiar with too many potatoes and too much manual labor. Her Poland-based daughter, by contrast, was tall and smartly outfitted in pointy-toed pumps, slim-cut jeans, a cropped jacket revealing a toned midriff (Yoga? Pilates? Or just a low-carb diet?), and a large, brass-studded leather bag, into which she dropped a silver cell phone.

Yes: Carrie Bradshaw is alive and well and living in Warsaw. Well, not just Warsaw. Conceived and raised in the United States, Carrie may still see New York as a spiritual home. But today you can find her in cities across Europe, Asia, and North America. Seek out the trendy shoe stores in Shanghai, Berlin, Singapore, Seoul, and Dublin, and you'll see crowds of single young females (SYFs) in their twenties and thirties, who spend their hours working their abs and their careers, sipping cocktails, dancing at clubs, and (yawn) talking about relationships. *Sex and the City* has gone global; the SYF world is now flat.

Is this just the latest example of American cultural imperialism? Or is it the triumph of planetary feminism? Neither. The globalization of the SYF reflects a series of stunning demographic and economic shifts that are pointing much of the world—with important exceptions, including Africa and most of the Middle East—toward a New Girl Order. It's a man's world, James Brown always reminded us. But if these trends continue, not so much.

Three demographic facts are at the core of the New Girl Order. First, women—especially, but not only, in the developed world—are getting married and having kids considerably later than ever before. According to the UN's *World Fertility Report*, the worldwide median age of marriage for women is up two years, from 21.2 in the 1970s to 23.2 today. In the developed countries, the rise has been considerably steeper—from 22.0 to 26.1.

Demographers get really excited about shifts like these, but in case you don't get what the big deal is, consider: in 1960, 70 percent of American 25-year-old women were married with children; in 2000, only 25 percent of them were. In 1970, just 7.4 percent of all American 30- to 34-year-olds were unmarried; today, the number is 22 percent. That change took about a generation to unfold, but in Asia and Eastern Europe the transformation has been much more abrupt. In today's Hungary, for instance, 30 percent of women in their early thirties are single, compared with 6 percent of their mothers' generation at the same age. In South Korea, 40 percent of 30-year-olds are single, compared with 14 percent only 20 years ago.

Nothing-new-under-the-sun skeptics point out, correctly, that marrying at 27 or 28 was once commonplace for women, at least in the United States and parts of northern Europe. The cultural anomaly was the 1950s and 60s, when the average age of marriage for women dipped to 20—probably because of post-Depression and postwar cocooning. But today's single 27-year-old has gone global—and even in the West, she differs from her late-marrying great-grandma in fundamental ways that bring us to the second

Illustrations by Arnold Roth

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piece of the demographic story. Today's aspiring middle-class women are gearing up to be part of the paid labor market for most of their adult lives; unlike their ancestral singles, they're looking for careers, not jobs. And that means they need lots of schooling.

In the newly global economy, good jobs go to those with degrees, and all over the world, young people, particularly women, are enrolling in colleges and universities at unprecedented rates. Between 1960 and 2000, the percentages of 20-, 25-, and 30-year-olds enrolled in school more than doubled in the U.S., and enrollment in higher education doubled throughout Europe. And the fairer sex makes up an increasing part of the total. The majority of college students are female in the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, Norway, and Australia, to name only a few of many places, and the gender gap is quickly narrowing in more traditional countries like China, Japan, and South Korea. In a number of European countries, including Denmark, Finland, and France, over half of all women between 20 and 24 are in school. The number of countries where women constitute the majority of graduate students is also growing rapidly.

That educated women are staying single is unsurprising; degreed women have always been more likely to marry late, if they marry at all. But what has demographers taking notice is the sheer transnational numbers of women postponing marriage while they get diplomas and start careers. In the U.K., close to a third of 30-year-old college-educated women are unmarried; some demographers predict that 30 percent of women with university degrees there will remain forever childless. In Spain—not so long ago a culturally Catholic country where a girl's family would jealously chaperone her until handing her over to a husband at 21 or so—women now constitute 54 percent of college students, up from 26 percent in 1970, and the average age of first birth has risen to nearly 30, which appears to be a world record.

Adding to the contemporary SYF's novelty is the third demographic shift: urbanization. American and northern European women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might have married at 26, but after a long day in the dairy barn or cotton mill, they didn't hang out at Studio 54 while looking for Mr. Right (or, as the joke has it, Mr. Right for Now). In the past, women who delayed marriage generally lived with their parents; they also remained part of the family economy, laboring in their parents' shops or farms, or at the very least, contributing to the family kitty. A lot of today's bachelorettes, on the other hand, move from their native village or town to Boston or Berlin or Seoul because that's where the jobs, boys, and bars are—and they spend their earnings on themselves.

By the mid-1990s, in countries as diverse as Canada, France, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, and Russia, women were out-urbanizing men, who still tended to hang around the home village. When they can afford to, these women live alone or with roommates. The Netherlands, for instance, is flush with public housing, some of it reserved for young students and workers, including lots of women. In the United States, the proportion of unmarried twentysomethings living with their parents has declined steadily over the last 100 years, despite sky-high rents and apartment prices. Even in countries where SYFs can't afford to move out of their parents' homes, the anonymity and diversity of city life tend to heighten their autonomy. Belgians, notes University of Maryland professor Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, have coined a term—"hotel families"—to describe the arrangement.

Combine these trends—delayed marriage, expanded higher education and labor-force participation, urbanization—add a global media and some disposable income, and voilà: an international lifestyle is born. One of its defining characteristics is long hours of office work, often in quasi-creative fields like media, fashion, communications, and design—areas in which the number of careers has exploded in the global economy over the past few decades. The lifestyle also means whole new realms of leisure and consumption, often enjoyed with a group of close girlfriends: trendy cafés and bars serving

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sweetish coffee concoctions and cocktails; fancy boutiques, malls, and emporiums hawking cosmetics, handbags, shoes, and $100-plus buttock-hugging jeans; gyms for toning and male-watching; ski resorts and beach hotels; and, everywhere, the frustrating hunt for a boyfriend and, though it's an ever more vexing subject, a husband.

The SYF lifestyle first appeared in primitive form in the U.S. during the seventies, after young women started moving into higher education, looking for meaningful work, and delaying marriage. Think of ur-SYF Mary Richards, the pre-Jordache career girl played by Mary Tyler Moore, whose dates dropped her off—that same evening, of course—at her apartment door. By the mid-nineties, such propriety was completely passé. Mary had become the vocationally and sexually assertive Carrie Bradshaw, and cities like New York had magically transformed into the young person's pleasure palace evoked by the hugely popular TV show *Sex and the City*. At around the same time, women in Asia and in post-Communist Europe began to join the SYF demographic, too. Not surprisingly, they also loved watching themselves, or at least Hollywood versions of themselves, on television. *Friends*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Sex and the City* became global favorites. In repressive places like Singapore and China, which banned *SATC*, women passed around pirated DVDs.

"Single young females are a sociological Starbucks: no matter how exotic the location, there they are."

By the late 1990s, the SYF lifestyle was fully globalized. Indeed, you might think of SYFs as a sociological Starbucks: no matter how exotic the location, there they are, looking and behaving just like the American prototype. They shop for shoes in Kyoto, purses in Shanghai, jeans in Prague, and lip gloss in Singapore; they sip lattes in Dublin, drink cocktails in Chicago, and read lifestyle magazines in Kraków; they go to wine tastings in Boston, speed-dating events in Amsterdam, yoga classes in Paris, and ski resorts outside Tokyo. "At the fashionable Da Capo Café on bustling Kolonaki Square in downtown Athens, Greek professionals in their 30s and early 40s luxuriate over their iced cappuccinos," a *Newsweek International* article began last year. "Their favorite topic of conversation is, of course, relationships: men's reluctance to commit, women's independence, and when to have children." Thirty-seven-year-old Eirini Perpovlov, an administrative assistant at Associated Press, "loves her work and gets her social sustenance from her *parea*, or close-knit group of like-minded friends."

Sure sounds similar to this July's *Time* story about Vicky, "a purposeful, 29-year-old actuary who . . . loves nothing better than a party. She and her friends meet so regularly for dinner and at bars that she says she never eats at home anymore. As the pictures on her blog attest, they also throw regular theme parties to mark holidays like Halloween and Christmas, and last year took a holiday to Egypt." At the restaurant where the reporter interviews them, Vicky's friends gab about snowboarding, iPods, credit-card rates, and a popular resort off the coast of Thailand. Vicky, whose motto is "work hard, play harder," is not from New York, London, or even Athens; she's from the SYF delegation in Beijing, China, a country that appears to be racing from rice paddies to sushi bars in less than a generation—at least for a privileged minority.

With no children or parents to support, and with serious financial hardship a bedtime story told by aging grandparents, SYFs have ignited what *The Economist* calls the "Bridget Jones economy"—named, of course, after the book and movie heroine who is perhaps the most famous SYF of all. Bridget Jonesers, the magazine says, spend their disposable income "on whatever is fashionable, frivolous, and fun," manufactured by a bevy of new companies that cater to young

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women. In 2000, Marian Salzman—then the president of the London-based Intelligence Factory, an arm of Young & Rubicam—said that by the 1990s, "women living alone had come to comprise the strongest consumer bloc in much the same way that yuppies did in the 1980s."

SYFs drive the growth of apparel stores devoted to stylish career wear like Ann Taylor, which now has more than 800 shops in the United States, and the international Zara, with more than 1,000 in 54 countries. They also spend paychecks at the Paris-based Sephora, Europe's largest retailer of perfumes and cosmetics, which targets younger women in 14 countries, including such formerly sober redoubts as Poland and the Czech Republic. The chain plans to expand to China soon. According to *Forbes*, the Chinese cosmetics market, largely an urban phenomenon, was up 17 percent in 2006, and experts predict a growth rate of between 15 and 20 percent in upcoming years. Zara already has three stores there.

The power of the SYF's designer purse is also at work in the entertainment industry. By the mid-1990s, "chick lit," a contemporary urban version of the Harlequin romance with the SYF as heroine, was topping bestseller lists in England and the United States. Now chick lit has spread all over the world. The books of the Irish writer Marian Keyes, one of the first and most successful chick-litterateurs, appear in 29 languages. *The Devil Wears Prada* was an international hit as both a book (by Lauren Weisberger) and a movie (starring Meryl Streep). Meantime, the television industry is seeking to satisfy the SYF's appetite for single heroines with *Sex and the City* clones like *The Marrying Type* in South Korea and *The Balzac Age* in Russia.

Bridget Jonesers are also remaking the travel industry, especially in Asia. A 2005 report from MasterCard finds that women take four out of every ten trips in the Asia-Pacific region—up from one in ten back in the mid-1970s. While American women think about nature, adventure, or culture when choosing their travel destinations, says MasterCard, Asian women look for shopping, resorts, and, most of all, spas. Female travelers have led to what the report calls the "spa-ification of the Asian hotel industry." That industry is growing at a spectacular rate—200 percent annually.

And now the maturing Bridget Jones economy has begun to feature big-ticket items. In 2003, the Diamond Trading Company introduced the "right-hand ring," a diamond for women with no marital prospects but longing for a rock. ("Your left hand is your heart; your right hand is your voice," one ad explains.) In some SYF capitals, women are moving into the real-estate market. Canadian single women are buying homes at twice the rate of single men. The National Association of Realtors reports that in the U.S. last year, single women made up 22 percent of the real-estate market, compared with a paltry 9 percent for single men. The median age for first-time female buyers: 32. The real-estate firm Coldwell Banker is making eyes at these young buyers with a new motto, "Your perfect partner since 1906," while Lowe's, the home-renovation giant, is offering classes especially for them. SYFs are also looking for wheels, and manufacturers are designing autos and accessories with them in mind. In Japan, Nissan has introduced the Pino, which has seat covers festooned with stars and a red CD player shaped like a pair of lips. It comes in one of two colors: "milk tea beige" and pink.

Japan presents a striking example of the sudden rise of the New Girl Order outside the U.S. and Western Europe. As recently as the nation's boom years in the 1980s, the dominant image of the Japanese woman was of the housewife, or *sengyoshufu*, who doted on her young children, intently prepared older ones for the world economy, and waited on the man of the house after his 16-hour day at the office. She still exists, of course, but about a decade ago she met her nemesis: the Japanese SYF. Between 1994 and 2004, the number of Japanese women between 25 and 29 who were unmarried soared from 40 to 54 percent; even more remarkable was the number of 30- to 34-year-old females who were unmarried, which rocketed from 14 to 27 percent. Because of Tokyo's expensive real-estate market, a good many of these young single women have shacked up with their parents, leading a prominent sociologist to brand them

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"parasite singles." The derogatory term took off, but the girls weren't disturbed; according to *USA Today*, many proudly printed up business cards bearing their new title.

The New Girl Order may represent a disruptive transformation for a deeply traditional society, but Japanese women sure seem to be enjoying the single life. Older singles who can afford it have even been buying their own apartments. One of them, 37-year-old Junko Sakai, wrote a best-selling plaint called *The Howl of the Loser Dogs*, a title that co-opts the term *makeinu*—"loser"—once commonly used to describe husbandless 30-year-olds. "Society may call us dogs," she writes, "but we are happy and independent." Today's Japanese SYFs are world-class shoppers, and though they must still fight workplace discrimination and have limited career tracks—particularly if they aren't working for Westernized companies—they're somehow managing to earn enough yen to keep the country's many Vuitton, Burberry, and Issey Miyake boutiques buzzing. Not so long ago, Japanese hotels wouldn't serve women traveling alone, in part because they suspected that the guests might be spinsters intent on hurling themselves off balconies to end their desperate solitude. Today, the losers are happily checking in at Japanese mountain lodges, not to mention Australian spas, Vietnamese hotels, and Hawaiian beach resorts.

And unlike their foreign counterparts in the New Girl Order, Japanese singles don't seem to be worrying much about finding Mr. Right. A majority of Japanese single women between 25 and 54 say that they'd be just as happy never to marry. Peggy Orenstein, writing in the *New York Times Magazine* in 2001, noted that Japanese women find American-style sentimentality about marriage puzzling. Yoko Harruka, a television personality and author of a book called *I Won't Get Married*—written after she realized that her then-fiancé expected her to quit her career and serve him tea—says that her countrymen propose with lines like, "I want you to cook miso soup for me for the rest of my life." Japanese SYFs complain that men don't show affection and expect women to cook dinner obediently while they sit on their duffs reading the paper. Is it any wonder that the women prefer Burberry?

Post-Communist Europe is also going through the shock of the New Girl Order. Under Communist rule, women tended to marry and have kids early. In the late eighties, the mean age of first birth in East Germany, for instance, was 24.7, far lower than the West German average of 28.3. According to Tomáš Sobotka of the Vienna Institute of Demography, young people had plenty of reasons to schedule an early wedding day. Tying the knot was the only way to gain independence from parents, since married couples could get an apartment, while singles could not. Furthermore, access to modern contraception, which the state proved either unable or unwilling to produce at affordable prices, was limited. Marriages frequently began as the result of unplanned pregnancies.

And then the Wall came down. The free market launched shiny new job opportunities, making higher education more valuable than under Communist regimes, which had apportioned jobs and degrees. Suddenly, a young Polish or Hungarian woman might imagine having a career, and some fun at the same time. In cities like Warsaw and Budapest, young adults can find pleasures completely unknown to previous generations of singles. In one respect, Eastern European and Russian SYFs were better equipped than Japanese ones for the new order. The strong single woman, an invisible figure in Japan, has long been a prominent character in the social landscape of Eastern Europe and Russia, a legacy, doubtless, of the Communist-era emphasis on egalitarianism (however inconsistently applied) and the massive male casualties of World War II.

Not that the post-Communist SYF is any happier with the husband material than her Japanese counterpart is. Eastern European gals complain about men overindulged by widowed mothers and unable to adapt to the new economy. According to *The Economist*, many towns in what used to be East Germany now face *Frauenmangel*—a lack of women—as SYFs who excelled in school have moved west for jobs, leaving the poorly performing men behind. In some towns, the ratio is just 40 women to 100 men. Women constitute the majority of both high school and college graduates in Poland. Though Russian

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women haven't joined the new order to the same extent, they're also grumbling about the men. In Russian TV's *The Balzac Age*, which chronicles the adventures of four single thirtysomething women, Alla, a high-achieving yuppie attorney, calls a handyman for help in her apartment. The two—to their mutual horror—recognize each other as former high school sweethearts, now moving in utterly different social universes.

There's much to admire in the New Girl Order—and not just the previously hidden cleavage. Consider the lives most likely led by the mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, and so on of the fashionista at the Warsaw airport or of the hard-partying Beijing actuary. Those women reached adulthood, which usually meant 18 or even younger; married guys from their village, or, if they were particularly daring, from the village across the river; and then had kids—end of story, except for maybe some goat milking, rice planting, or, in urban areas, shop tending. The New Girl Order means good-bye to such limitations. It means the possibility of more varied lives, of more expansively nourished aspirations. It also means a richer world. SYFs bring ambition, energy, and innovation to the economy, both local and global; they simultaneously promote and enjoy what author Brink Lindsey calls "the age of abundance." The SYF, in sum, represents a dramatic advance in personal freedom and wealth.

But as with any momentous social change, the New Girl Order comes with costs—in this case, profound ones. The globalized SYF upends centuries of cultural traditions. However limiting, those traditions shaped how families formed and the next generation grew up. So it makes sense that the SYF is partly to blame for a worldwide drop in fertility rates. To keep a population stable, or at its "replacement level," women must have an average of at least 2.1 children. Under the New Girl Order, though, women delay marriage and childbearing, which itself tends to reduce the number of kids, and sometimes—because the opportunity costs of children are much higher for educated women—they forgo them altogether. Save Albania, no European country stood at or above replacement levels in 2000. Three-quarters of Europeans now live in countries with fertility rates below 1.5, and even that number is inflated by a disproportionately high fertility rate among Muslim immigrants. Oddly, the most Catholic European countries—Italy, Spain, and Poland—have the lowest fertility rates, under 1.3. Much of Asia looks similar. In Japan, fertility rates are about 1.3. Hong Kong, according to the CIA's *World Factbook*, at 0.98 has broken the barrier of one child per woman.

For many, fertility decline seems to be one more reason to celebrate the New Girl Order. Fewer people means fewer carbon footprints, after all, and thus potential environmental relief. But while we're waiting for the temperature to drop a bit, economies will plunge in ways that will be extremely difficult to manage—and that, ironically, will likely spell the SYF lifestyle's demise. As Philip Longman explains in his important book *The Empty Cradle*, dramatic declines in fertility rates equal aging and eventually shriveling populations. Japan now has one of the oldest populations in the world—one-third of its population, demographers predict, will be over 60 within a decade. True, fertility decline often spurs a temporary economic boost, as more women enter the workforce and increase income and spending, as was the case in 1980s Japan. In time, though, those women—and their male peers—will get old and need pensions and more health care.

And who will pay for that? With fewer children, the labor force shrinks, and so do tax receipts. Europe today has 35 pensioners for every 100 workers, Longman points out. By 2050, those 100 will be responsible for 75 pensioners; in Spain and Italy, the ratio of workers to pensioners will be a disastrous *one-to-one*. Adding to the economic threat, seniors with few or no children are more likely to look to the state for support than are elderly people with more children. The final irony is that the ambitious, hardworking SYF will have created a world where her children, should she have them, will need to work even harder in order to support her in her golden years.

Aging populations present other problems. For one thing, innovation and technological

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breakthroughs tend to be a young person's game—think of the young Turks of the information technology revolution. Fewer young workers and higher tax burdens don't make a good recipe for innovation and growth. Also, having fewer people leads to declining markets, and thus less business investment and formation. Where would you want to expand your cosmetics business: Ireland, where the population continues to renew itself, or Japan, where it is imploding?

And finally, the New Girl Order has given birth to a worrying ambivalence toward domestic life and the men who would help create it. Many analysts argue that today's women of childbearing age would have more kids if only their countries provided generous benefits for working mothers, as they do in Sweden and France. And it's true that those two countries have seen fertility rates inch up toward replacement levels in recent years. But in countries newly entering the New Girl Order, what SYFs complain about isn't so much a gap between work and family life as a chasm between their own aspirations and those of the men who'd be their husbands (remember those Japanese women skeptical of a future cooking miso soup). Adding to the SYF's alienation from domesticity is another glaring fact usually ignored by demographers: the New Girl Order is fun. Why get married when you can party on?

That raises an interesting question: Why are SYFs in the United States—the Rome of the New Girl Order—still so interested in marriage? By large margins, surveys suggest, American women want to marry and have kids. Indeed, our fertility rates, though lower than replacement level among college-educated women, are still healthier than those in most SYF countries (including Sweden and France). The answer may be that the family has always been essential ballast to the individualism, diversity, mobility, and sheer giddiness of American life. It helps that the U.S., like northwestern Europe, has a long tradition of "companionate marriage"—that is, marriage based not on strict roles but on common interests and mutual affection. Companionate marriage always rested on the assumption of female equality. Yet countries like Japan are joining the new order with no history of companionate relations, and when it comes to adapting to the new order, the cultural cupboard is bare. A number of analysts, including demographer Nicholas Eberstadt, have also argued that it is America's religiousness that explains our relatively robust fertility, though the Polish fertility decline raises questions about that explanation.

It's by no means certain that Americans will remain exceptional in this regard. The most recent census data show a "sharp increase," over just the past six years, in the percentage of Americans in their twenties who have never married. Every year sees more books celebrating the SYF life, boasting titles like *Singular Existence* and *Living Alone and Loving It*. And SYFs will increasingly find themselves in a disappointing marriage pool. The *New York Times* excited considerable discussion this summer with a front-page article announcing that young women working full-time in several cities were now outearning their male counterparts. A historically unprecedented trend like this is bound to have a further impact on relations between the sexes and on marriage and childbearing rates.

Still, for now, women don't seem too worried about the New Girl Order's downside. On the contrary. The order marches on, as one domino after another falls to its pleasures and aspirations. Now, the *Singapore Times* tells us, young women in Vietnam are suddenly putting off marriage because they "want to have some fun"—and fertility rates have plummeted from 3.8 children in 1998 to 2.1 in 2006.

And then there's India. "The Gen Now bachelorette brigade is in no hurry to tie the knot," reports the *India Tribune*. "They're single, independent, and happy." Young urbanites are pushing up sales of branded apparel; Indian chick lit, along with *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, flies out of shops in Delhi and Mumbai. Amazingly enough, fertility rates have dropped below replacement level in several of India's major cities, thanks in part to aspirant fashionistas. If in India—*India!*—the New Girl Order can reduce population growth, then perhaps nothing is beyond its powers. At the very least, the Indian experiment gives new meaning to the phrase "shop till you drop." ▨

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Cherry Garcia and the End of Socialized Medicine

The new pharmacopoeia offers people too much knowledge and control for one-size-fits-all health care to cope with.

Peter Huber

On June 19, 1987, Ben & Jerry's introduced Cherry Garcia, in honor of the man who played lead guitar for the Grateful Dead. The Food and Drug Administration struck back three months later, when it approved the first of a new family of statin drugs that curb cholesterol production in the human liver. A synthetic statin licensed a decade later would become the most lucrative drug in history. At its peak, Lipitor was streaming $14 billion a year into Pfizer's coffers.

Let's not blame the victim: we don't choose Cherry Garcia; it chooses us. Lipitor is a lifesaver for 600,000 genetically unlucky Americans who harbor a bad-cholesterol gene or two on chromosome 19, and for another 100 million victims of our supersize-me culture. Fourteen billion dollars is a bargain for problems as pernicious as these. Or is it? Let's blame the victim. The human body is so comfortable with fat that it rarely complains about a cholesterol glut in the blood until seconds before things crash. Many who should be worried never even get their blood checked. Many who do check it fail to take their Lipitor. None of us really needs the pill anyway—just lose the ice cream, shed the pounds, stop smoking, and exercise regularly. Lipitor is a chemical version of the bulimic's finger down the throat.

Or think of it as an antibiotic for people infected with cholesterol. The first statin was isolated from fungus by a Japanese biochemist, who figured that if some microbes secrete penicillin to kill rivals, others might have devised a way to kill by crippling production of the cholesterol glue that holds enemy cells together. Like other antibiotics, statins target the chemistry of life—ours. Health once depended mainly on killing germs. Now, most drugs are used to poison people.

Call it tuning, if you prefer. Lipitor tunes our cholesterol. Anti-stroke medicines tune our platelets, antidepressants our serotonin and dopamine, heart medicines our angiotensin-converting enzymes, contraceptives our estrogen. Cancer drugs tame or kill our own mutant genes. And for every drug to suppress chemical excess, there's another to address deficits: insulin for the underperforming pancreas, clotting factors for bleedy blood, Synthroid for the tired thyroid, and cancer-suppressing proteins to lend a hand to tumor-suppressing genes.

People-tuning drugs aren't all new—aspirin, it turns out, is Lipitor for inflammatory prostaglandins—but the speed at which they are multiplying is very new. So too are the cost, complexity, and the sheer audacity of medicine's new mission: to bottle an upper or downer for every last molecule that makes us tick or gums up the works. There's still far more of this in the lab than in the pharmacy, but there's a lot out already, and it's going to keep coming.

Medicine has never seen—nor much needed—anything like this biochemical arsenal before. When infectious germs were still ubiquitous, few people lived long enough to clog their arteries with ice cream. But by 1967, a century after London launched the first systematic attack on

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The new medicine splits health-care economics in two: between those who indulge unhealthy habits . . .

cholera, America's war against germs was officially over and won—the surgeon general said so [see "Germs and the City," Spring 2007]. In affluent countries, most diseases now originate in human chemistry. Doctors and hospitals spend most of their time grappling with its cumulative effects. Most of our drugs are prescribed to neutralize it. Some people are still attacked by microbes, but such assaults from the outside aren't the big problem any more. The cholera of our times is a stew of specific, discrete molecules, concocted by genes, gluts of cigarettes, beer, ice cream, and other delicious consumables, and by whatever attitude problems we might have about eating our peas or taking our pills.

No two human stews are quite the same, however, and the problems that they incubate are much less evenhanded than the ones spread by sewage and sneezing neighbors. Contagion is the melting-pot disease; it homogenizes and unifies. Cholera killed a duchess as easily as a flower girl. Cholesterol and other human choleras

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are rooted in our private differences. They disassemble our health, fragment treatment, and pull us apart.

The new medicine offers instead something that the old never could: personal control. Germs are always finding new ways to infect and spread, bad luck invariably figures in who gets hit, and epidemics will forever remain surreptitious and surprising. Human chemistry is much more complex, but comparatively slow and stable. And molecule by molecule, medicine is now making it visible, predictable, and tractable. Cholesterol can be quite as lethal as cholera, but how much of it you have in your own blood this morning, and what it will do to your heart in 2017, isn't a matter of dumb luck—not any more.

This great etiological shift—from the medicine of us versus germs to the medicine of us versus us—upends everything. Disease and its cures now depend on factors too fragmented for conventional insurance pools to contain, too costly for public treasuries to underwrite, and too divisive for public authorities even to discuss, much less manage. The era of big government is over in medicine, too. Within a decade or two, a charismatic president will deliver on the promise to end health care as we know it. What then? Science will discover, competition will supply, patients will choose, and freedom will deliver better medicine and far better health, at lower cost, to many more people.

Asian-American women have a life expectancy of almost 87 years; African-American men, 69 years. We have these facts on the authority of *Eight Americas*, a 2006 study by number crunchers at Harvard's School of Public Health. Women in Stearns County, Minnesota, live about 22 years longer than men in southwest South Dakota, and 33 years longer than Native American men in six of that state's counties. The gap between the highest and lowest life expectancies for U.S. race-county combinations is over 35 years. Some race-sex-county groups typically die in their nineties, others in their fifties. Some are healthier than the norm in Iceland, Europe, and Japan, others sicker than Nicaragua and Uzbekistan.

Factoring out wealth, race, and access to health insurance doesn't eliminate most of these disparities. Low-income whites die four years sooner in Appalachia and the Mississippi Valley than they do farther north. The healthiest whites are low-income residents of the rural Northern Plains states. In the West, American Indians who remain on the reservation die much sooner than whites.

What accounts for these cavernous differences? Harvard dares to name six leading "risk factors" for the population as a whole—alcohol, tobacco, obesity, high blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose—and reports that these factors correlate strongly with the spread in life expectancy across its Eight Americas. One of the study's authors ventured to suggest, albeit only in an interview, that where you live may point, in turn, to ancestry, diet, exercise, and occupation.

This is timid hash, and there are only two ways out of it. Harvard retreats into fog: we're beset by "socioeconomic," "cultural," and other "distal causes" of disease. The other alternative is to disassemble culture, lifestyle, gender, and ancestry into components as small, specific, and measurable as cholesterol. At the far end of this politically treacherous trail, the distal fog melts away in the harsh light of molecular chemistry.

A molecule can change your life quite as much, if not quite as quickly, as standing at the wrong end of a bullet or a speeding truck. A doctor going door to door on New York's Lower East Side in 1911 could have cured rotting gums, grotesque swelling in the legs, brittle bones, noxious skin ailments, and a thick catalog of other debilitating diseases by distributing a pill—just one—that's now cheaper than candy, and so familiar we no longer view it as medicine at all. But a century ago, these terrible diseases killed and crippled so many people—tens of thousands of Americans every year—that many doctors viewed them as infectious. They weren't. Industrial processing was stripping nutrients from the food that fed the city. Kids needed Flintstones.

The first vitamin was isolated in 1912. Others followed, and chemists soon found ways to

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extract or synthesize them cheaply. Prodded by private charities, medical associations, state health authorities, and federal guidelines, major food suppliers eradicated rickets, scurvy, goiter, beriberi, and pellagra, by returning to their products what they had inadvertently removed; they also improved infant health enormously by fortifying flour, milk, and salt, and promoting the consumption of cod-liver oil by pregnant women. By 1950, the Flintstoning of the American diet was routine, and the national menu was back to healthy again, or so many people thought.

They too were wrong. By 2005, seven of the world's ten most profitable drugs owed most of their success to our foolish mouths. Two of those drugs lowered cholesterol, one suppressed the blood's tendency to clot on cholesterol plaques, one lowered high blood pressure caused in part by clogged arteries, two were for heartburn and acid reflux, and one was for asthma, often aggravated by cigarettes. In Western countries, smoking still causes more deaths than all other readily preventable causes combined, but gluttony is catching up. It's now responsible for 350,000 preventable deaths in the United States every year, including about one-third of all cancers.

"By 2005, seven of the world's ten most profitable drugs owed most of their success to our foolish mouths."

Cholesterol was one of the first molecules to emerge from the disassembly of glut-and-gene statistics because it plays such a big role in gluing us together. In 1985, in their own Nobel lecture on the lipid, Michael Brown and Joseph Goldstein noted that cholesterol was "the most highly decorated small molecule in biology," with eight prior Nobels on its shelf. But however often it may party in Stockholm, cholesterol will never be as simple as cholera, because what it does depends so much on whom it's gluing. Thin families are all alike, but every fat family is unhappy in its own way.

About one in three Americans officially has fat blood—cholesterol tagged somewhere between a trifle chubby and obese. The main cause is a chubby diet, but some bodies handle their Cherry Garcia worse than others. About two people in 1,000 are born with a bad-cholesterol gene. Their livers can't handle cholesterol as well as their mouths can, and they're 20 times more likely to suffer a heart attack before 60. About one in a million is born with two copies of the gene, and the heart attacks then begin in childhood. About one person in two of European ancestry is born with a bad-heart gene, which boosts the risk of heart disease by 15 to 20 percent. About one in five is born with two copies, which more than doubles the risk.

Similar muddles of gluts and genes now underlie most of what ails us. The first patient we meet in Sherwin Nuland's *How We Die* is a powerfully built construction-industry executive whose business success had "seduced him into patterns of living we now know are suicidal," back when "smoking, red meat, and great slabs of bacon, butter, and belly were thought to be the risk-free rewards of achievement." The patient has been admitted to the hospital complaining of chest pain, but he seems fine and is resting comfortably. And he's just seconds away from the violent heart attack that will kill him.

Genes are the other big part of the story, as they quite possibly were with Nuland's unhealthy executive. At least 3,000 distinct genetic links to disease are already known or suspected—for heart disease and diabetes; for breast, colon, kidney, prostate, and dozens of other cancers; for arthritis, Alzheimer's, cystic fibrosis, Parkinson's, and Huntington's disease; and for porphyria, the nervous-system disorder thought to have afflicted King George III. Nuland's brother and one of his parents both died of colon cancer. "The best assurance of longevity," he notes, "is to choose the right father and mother."

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No such rumination about personal frailties was required when the authorities opened London's assault on cholera in the mid-nineteenth century. To be as infectious as they are, germs must use public transit—the common water or air, most typically—and they must target common human chemistry—the bacterial peg must fit neatly into some chemical hole that most of us share.

The difference between medicine's old simplicity and its new complexity is rooted in molecular biology. A typical bacterium has a few thousand genes; a typical virus, just a dozen or so. These small numbers keep the biochemistry of infectious disease and its antidotes relatively simple. New York today has a population of 8 million, each resident of the city has about 25,000 different genes, and no two residents are configured quite the same. And the germ of a biochemically unique disease may lurk in any one flawed gene, or combination of antagonistic genes, or confluence of genes and lifestyle.

By scrutinizing differences in our chemistry, biochemists can now disassemble glut-and-gene diseases into molecules that can be exposed long before they morph into plaques, clots, tremors, tumors, occluded airwaves, clogged arteries, and failed muscles. Breast cancer used to be a lump; now it's at least four genes, two of which, when paired, make a tumor almost certain. Alzheimer's disease has been linked to four genes. Autism may result from glitches spread across 100 or more. Fats, proteins, enzymes, antigens, and hormones adrift in our bodies presage problems that lie so far in the future that conventional medicine does not yet see any "disease" at all; they can also flag the seeds of disease already planted but still too tiny to discern with any conventional diagnostic tools. Perilous-lifestyle genes control hormone levels, brain chemistry, nerve functions, and metabolic rates, which in turn influence stress, pleasure, irritability, aggression, impulsive behavior, suicidal tendencies, alcoholism, and sexual appetites. The Y chromosome seems especially toxic—men are far more self-destructive than women.

Conditioned to celebrate our differences, we still find it very difficult to discuss suicidal lifestyles and flawed genes. But the relentless advance of molecular science is outing them all, regardless. Medicine's principal mission today is to provide antidotes to the unhealthy side of human diversity, diversity defined by our own fissiparous chemistry.

Because they treat our differences, not what we share, the new drugs cost far more than the old. Brewing huge vats of penicillin or Lipitor is quite cheap. The expensive part—$1 billion or so per drug—is discovering the recipe and selling it to regulators, insurers, doctors, and patients. Most of that billion is spent before the first pill is sold; the per-patient cost depends largely on how many people the pill then treats. One vaccine, administered to many of the healthy, can protect the whole planet. Lipitor, by contrast, treats a few million Americans. Gleevec was first licensed to treat 40,000 patients with the "Philadelphia chromosome," which causes a rare form of leukemia. A disease with four separate genetic roots probably requires four miracle drugs on the shelf. "Pharmacogenomics" fragments things further still, by tailoring drugs to patient-specific genes.

From here on out, cost—rather than any shortage of targets or biochemical know-how—will determine how fast drug companies develop and license new antidotes to human chemistry. The molecule spies have handed drug labs a gigantic stack of blueprints; all the rest comes down to dogged, though stupendously expensive, chemical, medical, and legal engineering. There were only a few dozen vaccines and antibiotics in the field when the authorities declared the war on germs pretty much won. There will be thousands of people tuners in the arsenal before anyone is rash enough to announce that we have human chemistry fully under control.

And the announcement will still come too soon. Molecular medicine can also deliver thinner thighs, broader shoulders, fewer wrinkles, choreographed pregnancies, designer babies, better hair, sex, and sleep, and whatever else the incorrigible mountain biker may crave. Biochemists have already identified one "grim reaper" gene, and several "fountain of youth" genes, which point

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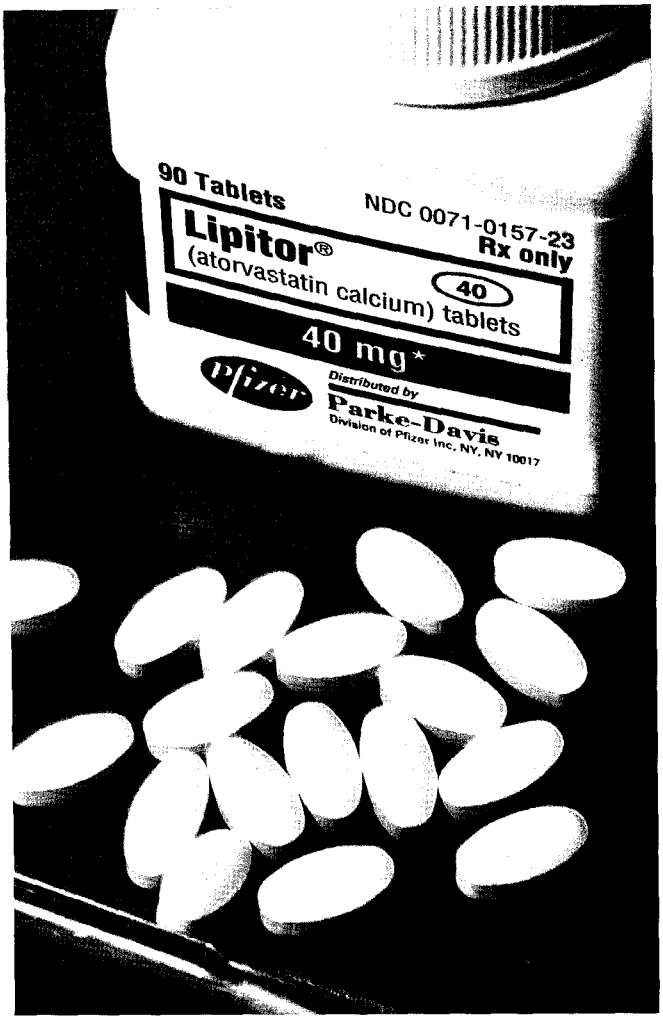

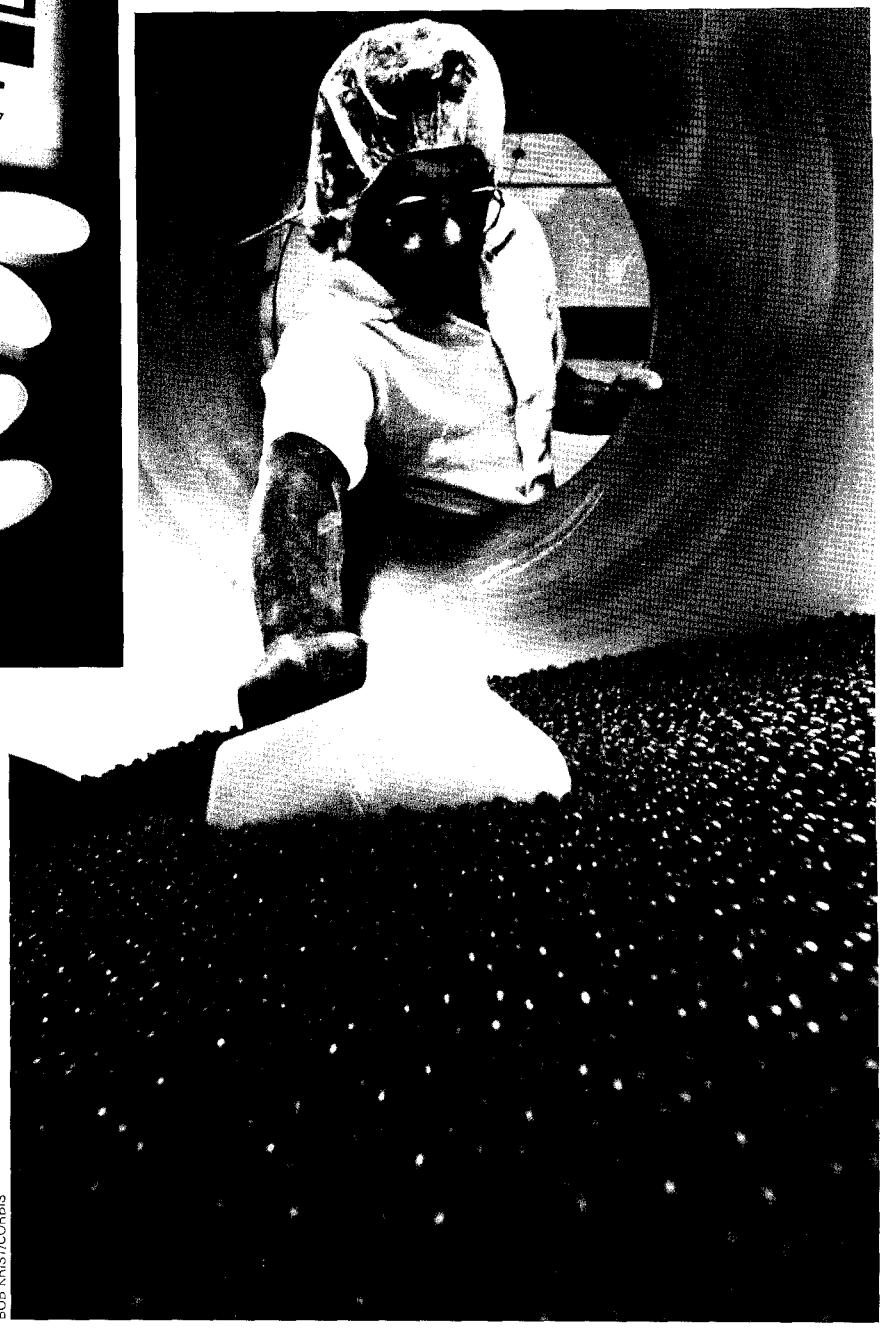

BOB KRIST/CORBIS

. . . and those who don't, or who at least control their effects with a cutting-edge biochemical arsenal.

the way to lots more beyond-perfect pills. "The first person to live to be 1,000 years old is certainly alive today," declares Aubrey de Grey, a Cambridge University geneticist. "I am working on immortality," says Michael Rose, a professor of evolutionary biology at the University of California, Irvine.

Finishing the job could take time—the science and medicine of fragments won't soon coalesce into a clear picture of how all the bits and pieces interact. But medicine does now have a deep, biochemical logic that sharply separates it from its past. Killer gluts and genes are much more complicated than killer germs, but the new pharmacology surpasses the old by an even wider margin. And the new medicine doesn't have to get us all the way to eternity to transform the economics and politics of health care beyond recognition.

Most fundamentally, molecular medicine puts the patient in control. It tells him where his personal gluts and genes will probably take him years from now, and exactly how to dodge

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destiny by downing less ice cream or more Lipitor. The patient with this much personal control in easy reach will also, at some point, come to be viewed as responsible for failing to do the right thing.

Molecular medicine's most important revelation suggests a very modest prescription: some things are best kept out of our lungs, guts, blood, and chromosomes. This, of course, is why we have rules to keep mold, dead insects, smoke, asbestos, benzene, radiation, and more out of food, workplaces, water, and air. Many individuals are now at least equally careful about what they eat, drink, and inhale, and some go so far as to tinker with genes. If each parent harbors a bad-cholesterol gene, a couple faces a one-in-four risk of bearing a child who will have a disastrous cholesterol problem. A routine test early in pregnancy lets the parents find out, and then redeal their genetic cards, if they wish to. Most people, however, still prefer to take their genetic chances with offspring, and many still line up for a daily fix of fat, nicotine, tar, alcohol, salt, or cocaine.

That so many tests and pills can now help keep our chemistry in balance amplifies these differences. Health-careless people tend to be as casual with pills as they are with dessert. Lipitor only widens the gap between people who generally live informed, disciplined lives, and those who don't.

Lifestyles certainly can change for the better. Harvard reports that Native Americans who leave the reservation soon become much healthier. And shining a harsh diagnostic light on bad habits does help nudge people in the right direction. But for the most part, suicidal lifestyles have proved stubbornly resistant to change. It took decades to curb smoking. Cholesterol's perils have been understood for at least as long as tobacco's, but we actually need it, suppliers are everywhere, they can't all be taxed and harried as the handful of big tobacco companies were, and diets are getting worse.

Much about the way genes move and lifestyles develop seems to keep health stuck in its rut, for better or worse. Asian-Americans, Harvard reports, somehow pass on their longevity to their kids; Ben & Jerry's has apparently failed to corrupt them. Genes tend to travel in packs, too, because people tend to look for mates much like themselves. Whatever the reasons, the health lines separating Harvard's Eight Americas have persisted for generations.

In the One America vision of things, better government would deliver better diets and also more Lipitor to all, and that would make health care, perhaps even health itself, equitable and uniform. But however clear a health problem may be, and however simple and cheap the cure, molecular medicine is riddled with lines that the nanny state just can't cross. Who would ever have thought, for example, that the pursuit of thinner thighs might cause 1,000 birth defects a year, many as dreadful as thalidomide's—and do it in the teeth of a federal scheme to save children from those very afflictions?

In 1998, the Food and Drug Administration resolved to slip a certain drug into everyone's food. Dr. David Kessler, the FDA's head at the time, preferred to call it a "pharmacologically active ingredient," but what's the difference? Folic acid (vitamin B_9) promotes normal embryonic growth quite as powerfully as thalidomide inhibits it—a healthy dose keeps a baby's spinal cord inside his spine, saving him from a lifetime in a wheelchair. The unborn baby needs a full ration in the first six weeks after conception, however, and roughly a quarter of young women have diets that fall short. So in 1998, Dr. K. directed that a modest dose be added to almost all flour, cornmeal, pasta, and rice flacked as "enriched."

Doctors of jurisprudence, however, have concluded that no one can force an expectant mother to eat her risotto, least of all for the benefit of what may be growing in her womb. And on the advice of low-carb guru Dr. Atkins, millions of fertile young women stopped eating at Kessler's diner shortly after he adopted his stealth-health menu. The late 1990s' dramatic decline in "neural tube" birth defects began leveling off in 2004. The public cure for a nutritional deficiency reached its limit, apparently, in a private cure for gluttony.

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The spina bifida baby isn't responsible for his fate, but his mother certainly is in charge of hers—the Supreme Court says so. And many people, it seems, are reasonably comfortable inside their own skin, warts and all, don't wish to change or medicate their lifestyles, and recoil at the thought of trying to jigger their children's genes. Stealth-health medicine worked brilliantly in the war against contagious germs—by stemming contagion, vaccines and antibiotics protect the unvaccinated, too—but it can hardly touch gluts and genes. Freedom includes the freedom to burn your candle at both ends, though it will not last the night.

So what will insurers do with the pill that leaves the kick in a pack of Marlboros but magically neutralizes the poison? Will Aetna and the surgeon general both celebrate this miracle drug, congratulate Pfizer for racking up $40 billion in new sales in just one year, gracefully accept their respective shares of the bill, and watch calmly as smoking rates ramp back up? Will Congress declare that every smoker needs this drug, every smoker must get it, and Pfizer's price gouging must end at once? Or will some heartless bookkeeper in Hartford or Washington dare to suggest that enough is enough, smoking is foolish, and the smoker can jolly well pay for the pill himself—or, failing that, for his own cancer, emphysema, and heart disease?

Lipitor for the Marlboro Man will take a while, but molecular medicine already raises questions like these every day, and they will keep piling up until they can no longer be concealed in the fine print of insurance policies or federal regulations. Common as they still are, insurance systems that pool health risks indiscriminately are vestiges of the past. They can't survive what lies ahead.

Insurance makes sense for risks that people can't control. Or to put it more bluntly, socialized medicine was a smart idea back when medicine was too stupid to halt infectious epidemics, discourage suicidal lifestyles, or discern the perils in killer genes. Berlin established national health coverage in 1883, soon after Robert Koch identified the bacterial cause of tuberculosis. When your neighbor has TB you're happy to buy him a trip to a hospital, preferably in Aruba. Britain's National Health Service was created in 1948, just as a cure—streptomycin—was becoming widely available. The antibiotic was cheaper than Aruba, and more effective, too. Washington began subsidizing a large chunk of U.S. health care five years earlier, when the IRS ruled that health benefits supplied by employers weren't taxable income for employees. The poisonous effects of tobacco and diet weren't nailed down until well into the 1950s. A systematic science for isolating and addressing perilous genes has emerged only in the last decade.

> **"Many people willing to share the burden of bad luck eventually tire of sharing the cost of bad behavior."**

But we're now past the days when infectious diseases were the dominant killers, and heart attacks and lung cancer seemed to strike as randomly as germs. And insurance looks altogether different when your neighbor's problem is a persistent failure to take care of himself. Many people willing to share the burden of bad luck eventually tire of sharing the cost of bad behavior.

The new medicine certainly hasn't banished luck completely—molecules don't predict car accidents and can't yet cure Huntington's disease, cystic fibrosis, or many rare cancers. A widely shared sense of common decency also impels protection of children and the elderly. In between, however, the unifying interest in health insurance is surely the sense that anyone can be struck out of the blue by a ruinously expensive health catastrophe. And step by relentless step, molecular medicine is taking luck out of the picture.

Now consider what that does to insurance economics. Most critics of the status quo focus on the more manageable of the two core problems that health insurers now face: runaway cost. But

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the real problem is that for many people, health care is getting *cheaper*. This is what makes actuaries wake up screaming in the night: disease is coming out of the closet, and the new medicine splits health-care economics in two. For the health conscious, skipping the Cherry Garcia may be difficult, but it's cheap, and Lipitor at almost any price is much cheaper than a heart attack. The health careless skip only the pill, not the ice cream, and end up in desperate need of what helps the least and costs the most. Doctors, hospitals, and scalpels summoned late in the day cost far more, and accomplish far less, than chemistry tuned to the point where there's never plaque to cut.

No one-size, one-price insurance scheme can keep people happy forever on both sides of this ever-widening divide. Aetna can't offer uniform coverage to individuals who face radically different risks, and who know it, too. Governments can't, either.

For now, public authorities and private insurers conceal the growing cracks with Silly Putty definitions of what they'll pay for. The old medicine of scalpels and human services is quietly but strictly rationed, if not by ability to pay, then by making patients wait in ever-lengthening lines for access to overworked doctors, obsolescent labs, and deteriorating hospitals. The new medicine winds up rationed by slow-rolling many new pills.

Britain, with one of the world's worst cholesterol problems, began prescribing statins years late, and much less aggressively than it should have. Nine years after the first statin had been licensed in the United States, Britain's National Health Service was still grappling with the fact that it couldn't afford the drugs, and its doctors were prescribing statins to only a small fraction of the people needing them. U.S. insurers, both public and private, often do much the same thing. They extend coverage to new medicines well after they're licensed, limit aggressive prescription early on, cover drugs sold in pharmacies much less generously than those administered in hospitals, and jigger deductibles and co-payments. The gap between what's covered and what the new medicine can treat grows steadily wider.

As they line up in emergency rooms, the health careless will never know what they're missing. But the health conscious will find out that they are paying for yesterday's medicine, which they don't need any more, and not getting tomorrow's, which they do. Then, inevitably, they will look for coverage tailored to their own responsible behavior.

If they were allowed to, private insurers would respond with policies openly tailored to molecular profiles and priced accordingly. Insurers already do quite a lot of that kind of tailoring indirectly, by insuring through employers—work often segments insurance pools along lines similar to those flagged by Harvard. Any private insurer that fails to push this kind of segmentation as far as it can will end up covering all the heart attacks, while competitors underwrite the low-fat or high-Lipitor diets.

Governments don't face the risks of competition, so they can insure as indiscriminately as taxpayers will allow. Or to similar effect, they can—and do—require private insurers to sell only one-size policies at one-size prices. Private insurers don't openly tie coverage to personal chemistry because a slew of laws protect privacy, mandate equal treatment, and bar discrimination on the basis of sex, race, disability, pregnancy, age, obesity, and much else. But however it's packaged and peddled, universal health insurance requires steadfast public support—and the political center just won't hold.

First, you have the pedestrian problem of costs that rise forever. The passive, clueless, and feckless must get ruinously expensive, last-ditch care because they don't show up until it's too late for anything else, and universal means what it says. The informed and engaged will stay healthy enough to demand better hair, skin, and sex along with their Lipitor. And while this is less frantic, desperate medicine, with a quite different price tag, its costs will keep rising, too, for as long as new lifestyles offer new ways to delight our bodies and medicine offers new antidotes to help us survive the pleasure. Vaccines and

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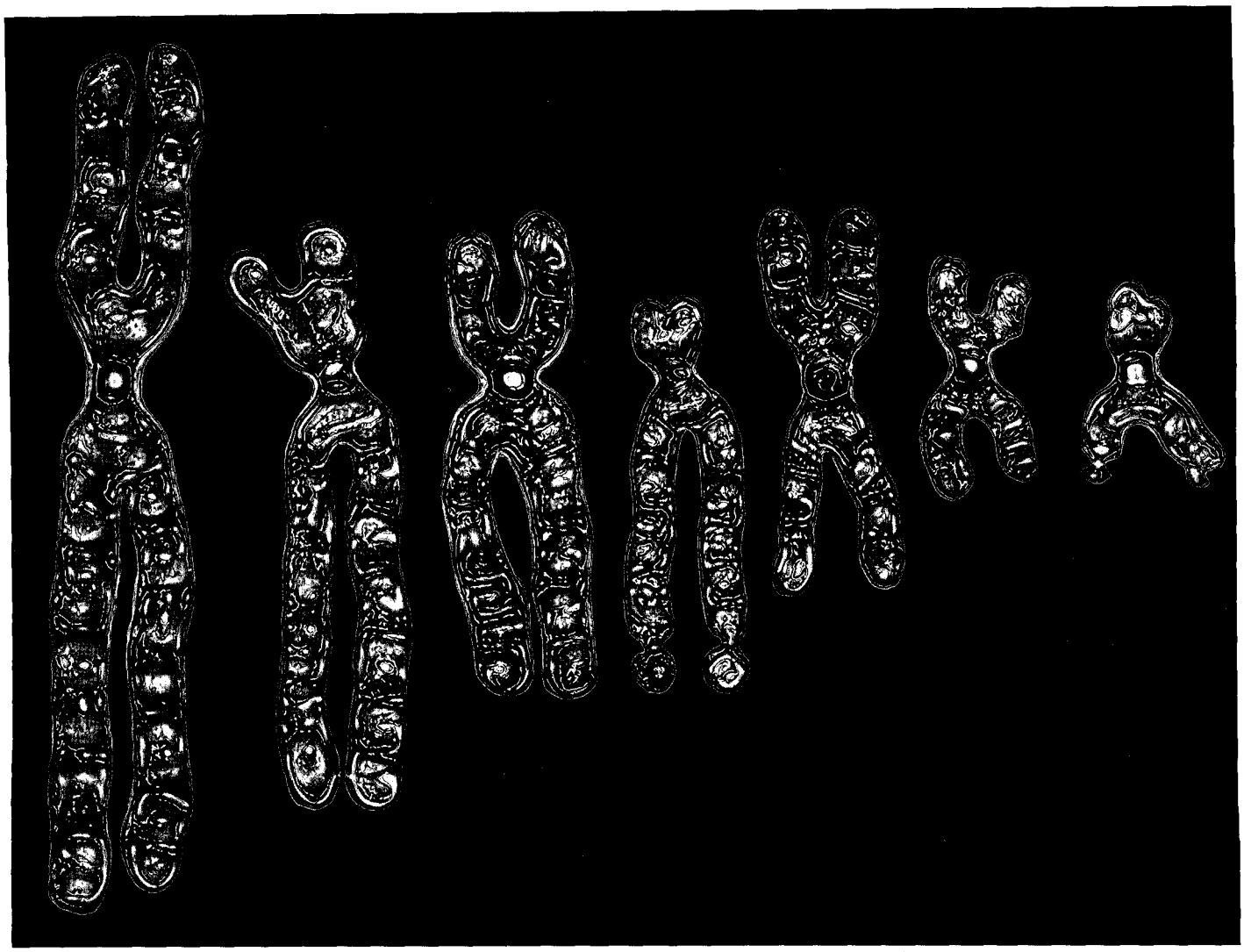

Many diseases begin, and much of the new medicine ends, in our politically treacherous genes.

antibiotics kill their own market by wiping out all the germs. Lipitor just keeps the customer alive to crave more Cherry Garcia.

Then there's the merciless fact of global competition. The cost of health care has a big, direct impact on both the cost of labor and the marginal tax rate. If California defies the new medicine's economics by requiring insurers to ignore everything but age and geography, firms can flee to Texas, Ireland, or Shanghai. Efficient labor markets require efficient health insurance, which will be found only where actuaries are allowed to find out as much as the rest of us can, and craft policies accordingly.

A third, deeper problem is (depending on your politics) either base selfishness or common sense. The pocketbook-healthy eventually tired of paying for welfare that persistently failed to end poverty; the health-healthy will tire of paying for health care that persistently fails to improve health. However selfless and generous people may be, responsible types eventually despair of trying to cure self-destructive behavior from a distance.

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Finally, the new medicine is too hot for even the political Right to handle, and the Left can hardly even acknowledge what it's all about. To pick just one politically insoluble example among many, scientists have already isolated chemical and genetic links to mental retardation. In due course, they will develop drugs to improve or compensate for genes that help shape intelligence. Then someone will have to decide whether mental acuity, say, is as important as cystic fibrosis, and if so, where insurers must set the IQ cutoff for coverage. Medicaid will have to set a federal line, and Virginia can perhaps establish a benchmark for the states.

Virginia has experience. In 1927, its medical authorities sought to sterilize Carrie Buck, a teenager they deemed a "mental defective." "Three generations of imbeciles are enough," declared Justice Holmes, in the Supreme Court's ruling that they could go right ahead. If the follow-up case returns to the high court in 2027, the question will be whether eugenics in a bottle is a right so fundamental that Virginia must pay for it.

All of us depend on the same short list of basic nutrients—a few dozen vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and raw calories. Cherry Garcia alone, as it happens, pretty much covers it. Or we can thrive for years on nothing fancier than mother's milk, which lacks even the cherries—many of us once did. This simplicity made deficiency diseases quite easy to beat, once science revealed what was missing. So easy that many people are surprised to learn that vitamin science earned a fistful of Nobel Prizes in its day, and that vitamins were very expensive before they became so cheap.

In the early 1920s, Quaker Oats offered $900,000 to buy a new method to enrich the vitamin D content of food. Sensing an opportunity to peddle health and pleasure in a single package, cigarette and beer companies also wanted the patent. The inventor, Professor Harry Steenbock of the University of Wisconsin, opted instead to set up an independent foundation to license the technology and return the proceeds to his lab. Ten years later, the foundation had earned more than $17 million on the patents—and rickets had almost disappeared from the United States.

Much as vitamin deficiencies did back then, chronic obesity now destroys joints, breaks bones, swells body tissues, and causes heart disease. For one exhilarating decade, Pfizer made a fortune suppressing just one molecule in the long, toxic list of things we shouldn't consume but often do. Then statin patents began to expire. On June 22, 2006, Merck still owned a statin, Zocor, that earned the company over $3 billion a year in the United States alone. The next day, the formula belonged to humanity.

Lipitor, though introduced later, had quickly eclipsed Zocor in the market, and its patent still had five years to run. But Zocor was now set to take a Pyrrhic revenge. U.S. insurers immediately began jiggering co-pay schedules to migrate patients to generic versions of Zocor. *Consumer Reports* estimated that a wholesale shift would save $7 billion to $11 billion a year. Lipitor's market share dropped 4 percentage points in the first half of 2006. Wall Street saw it coming: a few months earlier, Pfizer's stock price had hit an eight-year low, almost 50 percent below its Lipitor peak. Zocor still sold at about $3 a pill in early 2006; generic copies now sell for as little as 50 cents.

Statins end up very cheap for much the same reason that cholesterol did: there are huge economies of scale in farming cows for milk and fungi for statins, or in brewing up synthetic versions of almost anything. But it takes a delicate choreography of patent-protected monopoly and cutthroat competition to get the innovation first and the rock-bottom prices later. At present, the front end is financed mainly by the United States. Drug companies introduce most new drugs here first, and affluent Americans pay premium prices while the patents last. Less affluent Americans, along with public and private insurers in the United States, Britain, Canada, and the rest of the developed world, get a sharply discounted ride on their economic coattails. Three-dollar statins in New York in 1996 get 30-cent statins to London in 2006 and three-cent statins to Kuala Lumpur a few years later.

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Governments are impatient, however, especially when they have promised to supply what they can't possibly afford but can readily seize. The promise of universal care implies state-of-the-art care, so governments' principal response has been to skip straight to the three-cent pill. In the developing world, the authorities just fail to notice when pirates manufacture knockoffs. Most developed countries have gone halfway there, by instituting a monopoly buyer to bargain against the monopoly patent. Some members of Congress want to let U.S. patients order drugs from Canadian pharmacies, so that Ottawa will bargain with Pfizer on behalf of the poor in Oshkosh. Others want to set Washington up as the monopoly buying agent for all drugs that it pays for.

"The health-care crisis is not medicine that's too expensive for the poor but medicine that's too expensive for the rich."

Drug companies, however, are quite smart enough not to develop three-dollar pills for three-cent buyers. Collectively, these price-depressing strategies already make it unprofitable to pursue many drugs that treat rare diseases, and drugs for all but the most common diseases earn most of their profit in the unregulated U.S. market. From Big Pharma's perspective, we are now about half a country away—the rich-America half—from making most diseases too thrifty to bother with. Wherever it's implemented, every new scheme to undercut the value of an existing patent lowers the incentive to discover new drugs. Every such scheme sacrifices long-term global health for short-term political gain. Every last one of them is ice cream today, and never mind about tomorrow.

That is the real crisis in health care—not medicine that's too expensive for the poor but medicine that's too expensive for the rich, too expensive ever to get to market at all. Humanity is still waiting for countless more Lipitors to treat incurable cancers, Alzheimer's, arthritis, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, and a heartbreakingly long list of other dreadful but less common afflictions. Each new billion-dollar Lipitor will be delivered—if at all—by the lure of a multibillion-dollar patent. The only way to get three-cent pills to the poor is first to sell three-dollar pills to the rich.

With almost $30 trillion under management, Wall Street could easily double the couple of trillion it currently has invested in molecular medicine. The fastest way for Washington to deliver more health, more cheaply, to more people would be to unleash that capital by reaffirming patents and stepping out of the way.

On the other side of the pill, molecular medicine can only be propelled by the informed, disciplined consumer. Any scheme to weaken his role will end up doing more harm than good. Foggy promises of one-size, universal care maintain the illusion that the authorities will take good care of everyone. They reaffirm the obsolete and false view that health care begins somewhere out there, not somewhere in here.

Neither Pfizer nor Washington can ever stuff health itself into a one-price, uniform, One America box—not when health is as personal as ice cream, genes, and pregnancy, not when every mother controls her personal consumption of carbs, cholesterol, Flintstones, and Lipitor. But the thought that government authority can get more bodies in better chemical balance than free markets and free people is more preposterous than anything found in *Das Kapital*. Freedom is now pursuing a pharmacopoeia as varied, ingenious, complex, flexible, fecund, and personal as life itself, and the pursuit will continue for as long as lifestyles change and marriages mix and match. Given time, efficient markets will deliver a glut of cheap Lipitor for every glut of cheap cholesterol. And given time, free people will find their way to a better mix.

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An Anglosphere Future

How a shared tradition of ideas and values—not bloodlines—can be a force for liberty

Christopher Hitchens

Having devoured the Sherlock Holmes stories as a boy, I did what their author hoped and graduated to his much finer historical novels. The best of these, *The White Company*, appeared in 1890; it describes the recruitment and deployment of a detachment of Hampshire archers during the reign of King Edward III, a period that, as Arthur Conan Doyle phrased it, "constituted the greatest epoch in English History—an epoch when both the French and the Scottish kings were prisoners in London."

This book, it's of interest to note, also influenced Dwight Eisenhower's boyhood (I owe this information to the extraordinary *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters*, edited by Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley). For there came a time when this child of German-American parents also had to muster a considerable force from Hampshire headquarters, and launch them across the Channel in one of the greatest military interventions in history. Of course, on D-day, Eisenhower took care to have a French leader on his side (admittedly a turbulent and mutinous one), and Scottish regiments were as usual to the fore in the storming of the Atlantic Wall. But it's funny how one somehow can thrill to the same tradition, whether it's the medieval yeomen and bowmen of Anglo-Saxondom or the modern, mechanized, multinational coalition against fascism.

Doyle was only a few years from his first trip to the United States when he published *The White Company*, which he dedicated as follows: "To the hope of the future, the reunion of the English-speaking races, this little chronicle of our common ancestry is inscribed." Around the same time, two other renowned figures—Cecil Rhodes and Rudyard Kipling—made similar pitches. Two monuments, the Rhodes scholarships and the poem "The White Man's Burden," still survive in American life. The purpose of the

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Winston Churchill: master of a language uniquely hostile to euphemisms for tyranny

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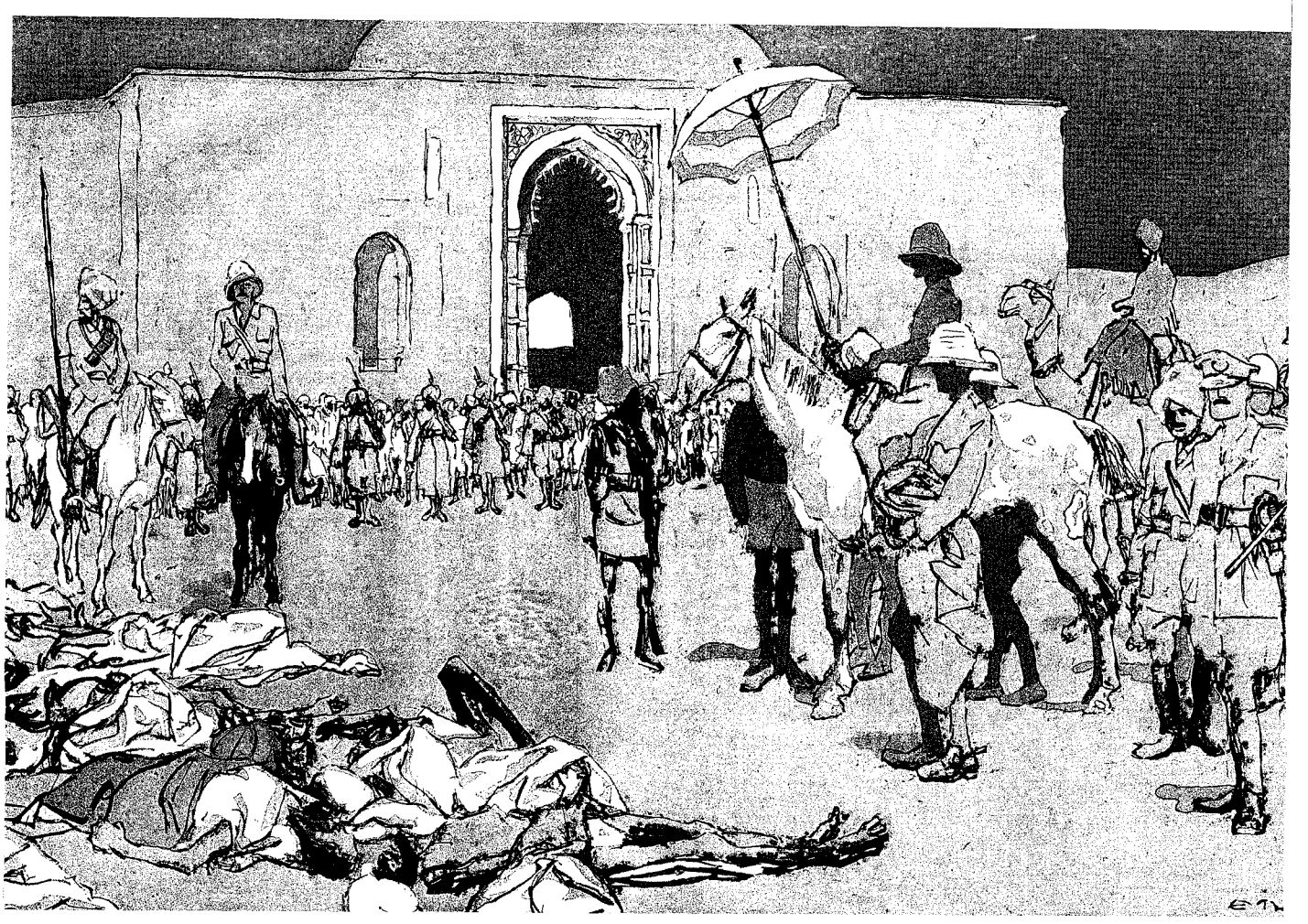

The Anglosphere must avoid nostalgia for an imperial past marked by crimes such as the 1919 massacre in Amritsar, India.

scholarships was to proselytize for the return of the U.S. to the British imperial fold. The poem, written for Theodore Roosevelt, who passed it to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, sought to influence the vote of the U.S. Senate on the annexation of the Philippines. (The poem's subtitle was "The United States and the Philippine Islands.") In urging the U.S. to pick up the scepter of empire, Kipling had one hope and one fear: hope of Anglo-American solidarity against rising German power; and fear of a revival of the demagogic atmosphere of 1894 and 1895, in which America and Britain almost went to war after the U.S., citing the Monroe Doctrine, intervened in a border dispute between Britain and Venezuela.

Doyle's visit coincided with the height of this anti-British feeling, and at a dinner in his honor in Detroit he had this to say:

> You Americans have lived up to now within your own palings, and know nothing of the real world outside. But now your land is filled up, and you will be compelled to mix more with the other nations. When you do so you will find that there is only one which can at all understand your ways and your aspirations, or will have the least

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sympathy. That is the mother country which you are now so fond of insulting. She is an Empire, and you will soon be an Empire also, and only then will you understand each other, and you will realize that you have only one real friend in the world.

After Detroit, Doyle spent Thanksgiving with Kipling and his American wife, Carrie, in Brattleboro, Vermont. It is of unquantifiable elements such as this that the Anglo-American story, or the English-speaking story, is composed.

To a remarkable extent, Americans continue to assume a deep understanding with the English—one that, in their view, reflects a common heritage much more than it does anything as mundane as a common interest. This assumption, at least as exemplified in the Bush-Blair alliance that sent expeditionary forces to Afghanistan and Mesopotamia, has recently taken a severe bruising on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as north of the U.S. border and in the countries of the antipodes: the historical homelands of the "English-speaking" adventure. The conservative British historian Andrew Roberts, author of the important new book *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Since 1900*, regards this as a matter of regret, as do I, though for different reasons. For no less different reasons, he and I believe that the "Anglosphere," to give it a recently updated name, may have a future as well as a past.

"To a remarkable extent, Americans continue to assume a deep understanding with the English."

The idea is certainly in the air. Earlier this year, President Bush hosted a lunch for Roberts in the Oval Office, with senior advisors Karl Rove, Steven Hadley, and Josh Bolten in attendance, and Dick Cheney was seen holding Roberts's book on a trip to Afghanistan. Other writers, including John O'Sullivan, have recently written about the unique virtues of Anglo-Americanism.

Roberts's book, though, exhibits some of the potential problems that can befall a defense of the Anglosphere. One shows up in its title. You will notice that Arthur Conan Doyle referred to the English-speaking "races." On the model of Winston Churchill's famous book of almost the same name, Roberts prefers the term "peoples." But this is to make a distinction without much difference. No such thing as an Australian or a Canadian "race" exists, so one either means to describe people of originally Anglo-Saxon "stock" (as we used to say) or one doesn't. It hasn't been very long since Lionel Trilling was denied tenure on the grounds, frankly stated, that a Jew could not understand English literature. Without an appreciation of the ways in which the language and ethnicity are quite distinct, a kind of imperialist nostalgia is likely.

Regrettably, Roberts doesn't always avoid such nostalgia, devoting a major portion of his book to vindicating episodes in the British colonial past that most Tories long ago ceased to defend. He represents General Reginald Dyer's massacre of protesters in the Indian city of Amritsar in 1919, for example, as a necessary law-and-order measure. He defends the catastrophic Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956: a folly that Eisenhower had to terminate. He writes leniently about the white settler regimes in southern Africa. And he never misses an opportunity to insult Irish nationalism, while whitewashing the Tory and Orange policies that led first to rebellion and second to bloody partition.

Determined to shoehorn everything into one grand theory, Roberts also flirts with tautology. For example, he mentions the opening of the Hoover Dam at Boulder City and comments: "The English-speaking peoples had long excelled at creating the wonders of the modern industrial world: the *Great Eastern*, the Brooklyn Bridge, the Sydney Bridge, the American, Canadian and Australian transcontinental railroads,

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the Panama Canal among them." A theory that tries to explain everything explains nothing: we can all think of other countries that have accomplished industrial and engineering marvels.

Further, the many advances in physics and medicine attributed to Jewish refugees in America (especially, for some reason, from Hungary) are slighted if credited to the genius of Englishness. Roberts describes radar as "another vital invention of the English-speaking peoples"—an insult to international scientific cooperation. One might add that Ferdinand de Lesseps did not shout orders in English when he organized the building of the Suez Canal. And Magna Carta wasn't written in English.

Nonetheless, properly circumscribed, the idea of an "Anglosphere" can constitute something meaningful. We should not commit the mistake of "thinking with the blood," as D. H. Lawrence once put it, however, but instead emphasize a certain shared tradition, capacious enough to include a variety of peoples and ethnicities and expressed in a language—perhaps here I do betray a bias—uniquely hostile to euphemisms for tyranny. In his postwar essay "Towards European Unity," George Orwell raised the possibility that the ideas of democracy and liberty might face extinction in a world polarized between superpowers but that they also might hope to survive in some form in "the English-speaking parts of it." English is, of course, the language of the English and American revolutions, whose ideas and values continue to live after those of more recent revolutions have been discredited and died.

Consider in this light one of Nelson Mandela's first acts as elected president of South Africa: applying to rejoin the British Commonwealth, from which South Africa had found itself expelled in the 1960s (by a British Tory government, incidentally) because of its odious racism. Many people forget that the Soweto revolt in the 1980s, which ultimately spelled apartheid's downfall, exploded after the Nationalist regime made the medium of school instruction exclusively Afrikaans, banning the classroom use of English, along with Xhosa and Zulu.

More recently, in July 2005, Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh came to Oxford University to receive an honorary degree and delivered a speech, not uncontroversial in India itself, in which he observed that many of India's splendors as a rising twenty-first-century superpower—from railroads to democracy to a law-bound civil service—were the result of its connection with England. "If there is one phenomenon on which the sun cannot set," Singh observed, "it is the world of the English-speaking peoples, in which the people of Indian origin are the single largest component." He added that the English language was a key element in the flourishing of India's high-tech sector. Few would have wanted to point this out, but it was Karl Marx who argued that India might benefit in this way from being colonized by England and not (and he spelled out the alternatives) Russia or Persia or Turkey.

We owe the term "Anglosphere" in large part to the historian and poet Robert Conquest, who this summer celebrated his 90th year of invincible common sense and courage in the fight against totalitarian thinking. In an appendix to his marvelous 2005 book *The Dragons of Expectation: Reality and Delusion in the Course of History*, he offers a detailed proposal for a broad Anglosphere alliance among the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, and the Caribbean, with the multiethnic English-speaking island of Bermuda as the enterprise's headquarters. Though he unfortunately does not include India, he does find it "perfectly conceivable that other countries particularly close to our condition might also accede—for example Norway and Gambia, in each of which English is widely understood and in each of which the political and civic structure is close to that of the rest of the states." Quixotic as all this may sound, it probably understates the growing influence of English as a world language—the language of business and the Internet and air-traffic control, as well as of literature (or of literatures, given the emergence, first predicted by Orwell, of a distinct English written by Indians).

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The shape of the world since September 11 has, in fact, shown the outline of such an alliance in practice. Everybody knows of Tony Blair's solidarity with the United States, but when the chips were down, Australian forces also went to Iraq. Attacked domestically for being "all the way with the USA," Australian prime minister John Howard made the imperishable observation that in times of crisis, there wasn't much point in being 75 percent a friend. Howard won reelection in 2004. Even in relatively neutralist Canada, an openly pro-U.S. government headed by Stephen Harper was elected in 2006, surprising pundits who predicted that a tide of anti-Americanism made such an outcome impossible.

"A post-9/11 America came to appreciate the fact that India had been fighting bin-Ladenism far longer than we had."

Howard's statement has a great deal of history behind it. Roberts defines that history as an intimate alliance that defeated German Wilhelmine imperialism in 1918, the Nazi-Fascist Axis in 1945, and international Communism in 1989. This long arc of cooperation means that a young officer in, say, a Scottish regiment has a good chance of having two or even three ancestors who fought in the same trenches as did Americans and New Zealanders. No military force evolved by NATO, let alone the European Union, can hope to begin with such a natural commonality, the lack of which was painfully evident in Europe's post-1989 Balkan bungling (from which a largely Anglo-American initiative had to rescue it).

The world now faces a challenge from a barbarism that is no less menacing than its three predecessors—and may even be more so. And in this new struggle, a post-9/11 America came—not a moment too soon—to appreciate the vital fact that India had been fighting bin-Ladenism (and had been its target) far longer than we had. That fact alone should have mandated a change of alignment away from the chronically unreliable Pakistani regime that had used the Taliban as its colonial proxy in Afghanistan. But it helped that India was also a polyethnic secular democracy with a largely English-speaking military, political, and commercial leadership. We're only in the earliest stages of this new relationship, which so far depends largely on a nuclear agreement with New Delhi, and with the exception of Silicon Valley, the U.S. does not yet boast a politically active Indian population. But the future of American-Indian relations is crucial to our struggle against jihadism, as well as to our management of the balance of power with China.

In considering the future of the broader Anglosphere tradition, especially in the context of anti-jihadism, it may help to contrast it with the available alternatives. As a supranational body, the United Nations has obviously passed the point of diminishing returns. Inaugurated as an Anglo-American "coalition of the willing" against Hitler and his allies, the UN—in its failure to confront the genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur and in its abject refusal to enforce its own resolutions in the case of Iraq—is a prisoner of the "unilateralism" of France, Russia, and, to a lesser extent, China. NATO may have been somewhat serviceable in Kosovo (the first engagement in which it ever actually fought as an alliance), but it has performed raggedly in Afghanistan. The European Union has worked as an economic solvent on redundant dictatorships in Spain, Portugal, and Greece, and also on old irredentist squabbles in Ireland, Cyprus, and Eastern Europe. But it is about to reach, if it has not already, a membership saturation point that will disable any effective decision-making capacity. A glaring example of this disability is the EU's utter failure to compose a viable constitution. Roberts correctly notes that "along with over two centuries of amendments the entire (readable and easily intelligible) U.S. Constitution can be printed out onto twelve pages of A4-sized paper; the (unreadable and impenetrably complicated) proposed European Constitution ran to 265."

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(Roberts doesn't mention the lucidity and brevity of the British constitution, perhaps because the motherland of the English-speaking peoples has absentmindedly failed to evolve one in written form, and thus will, on the demise of the present queen, have as head of state a strange middle-aged man with a soft spot for Islam and bizarre taste in wives.)

But the temptation to construe the Anglosphere too narrowly persists. Another recent book, *The Anglosphere Challenge*, by James C. Bennett, expresses astonishment at the low price that the British establishment has put on its old Commonwealth and Dominion ties, and some hostility to the way in which European connections now take precedence. But viewed historically, it is surely neither surprising nor alarming that the British decided to reverse Winston Churchill's greatest mistake—abstaining from original membership in the European common market—and to associate more closely with the neighboring landmass. As Roberts himself concedes, Britain now enjoys a unique Atlanticist partnership along with full and energetic participation in the councils of the European Union.

For most of my adult life, British prime ministers were classifiable as either Atlanticist or European in orientation. Thus, the conservative Edward Heath fixated on Brussels and distrusted Washington, while the Labour leaders Harold Wilson and James Callaghan were Euro-isolationists and little better than dittos to presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, respectively. In fact, with the notable exception of Margaret Thatcher, the Anglo-American relationship has fared rather better under the British center-Left. Perhaps this has something to do with the old devotion of the British Left, from Thomas Paine onward, to the ideals of the American Revolution. Of the defenders of the liberation of Iraq in the British media and political spheres, for example, most of the best-known spokesmen—Nick Cohen of the *Observer*, the *Financial Times*'s John Lloyd, and parliamentarians Denis MacShane, Peter Hain, and John Reid—belonged to the traditional Left. And it is many senior Conservatives who have recently gone the furthest in exploiting vulgar anti-American feeling among British voters. These are the ironies of history that Roberts's instinctive Toryism often prevents him from seeing.

An important thing to recognize about Tony Blair is that he was as much at home with American style and popular culture as he was when vacationing in France or Tuscany: that for the first time, the British had a prime minister who regarded the Atlanticist/European dichotomy as a false one. Nor did it hurt that on one day he could give a decent public speech in French and then on the next rally his party to identify its historical internationalism with the cause of the United States. He could even visit Dublin and claim some Irish descent, while offering a few conciliatory words about the wrongs of British policy since the Famine. And—not forgetting the Commonwealth and the Third World—he committed British forces to uphold a treaty with Sierra Leone and drove out the child-mutilating warlords who had invaded from Liberia.

This is quite a lot to set against the old Commonwealth tradition of Australian prime minister Sir Robert Menzies, who in the 1950s objected to being in the same "club" as newly independent African states and who forbade "colored" immigration to Australia itself. One of Roberts's Tory heroes, the late Enoch Powell, opposed immigration from nonwhite former colonies with the same fervor that he had once shown in opposing Indian independence. If he had stressed religion rather than race, he might have been seen as prescient; as it was, the majority of the British Right always openly favored Islamic Pakistan.

Today, the experience of true multicultural tolerance is something that needs defending, in Australia and Canada as much as in the U.K., against Islamist sectarianism and violence directed most virulently against Hindus and Jews. There is no way to fight this critical ideological battle on the imperial terrain of Kipling and Rhodes.

In late 1967, Britain's rule in Yemen ended, bringing an end to its centuries of presence "East of Suez." On the very last evening, the Labour defense minister Denis Healey shared

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a nostalgic sundowner with the British governor. As the shadows lengthened over the great harbor at Aden, the governor said that he thought the British Empire would be remembered for only two things: "the game of soccer and the expression 'fuck off.'" Who can doubt that these phenomena have endured and become part of the landscape of globalization? But the masochistic British attitude to inevitable decline seems to have reversed itself, at least to some extent. And the recent election of fresh governments in France and Germany shows that other Europeans—increasingly English-speaking—would rush to embrace the special American connection if, by any short-term miscalculation, the British might look to discard or vacate it.

Roberts's closing passage is his strongest. He gives a first-rate summary of the case for intransigent opposition to Islamist theocracy and to its cruel and violent epigones (as well as to its shady and illiterate apologists). He establishes all the essentials of the case for declaring our survival incompatible with totalitarianism and makes a crisp presentation of the urgency, necessity, and justice of the removal of Saddam Hussein. Along with William Shawcross's book *Allies*, his pages on this theme will find themselves consulted long after the ephemeral and half-baked antiwar texts are discredited and forgotten.

JOHN PARKIN/AP PHOTO

One of Nelson Mandela's first acts as elected president of South Africa was applying to rejoin the British Commonwealth.

I myself doubt that a council of the Anglosphere will ever convene in the agreeable purlieus of postcolonial Bermuda, and the prospect of a formal reunion does not entice me in any case. It seems too close to the model on which France gravely convenes its own former possessions under the narrow banner of *La Francophonie*. It may not be too much to hope, though, that, along with soccer and a famously pungent injunction, some of the better ideas of 1649 and 1776 will continue to spread in diffuse, and ironic, ways. ■

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From the H-Bomb to the Human Bomb

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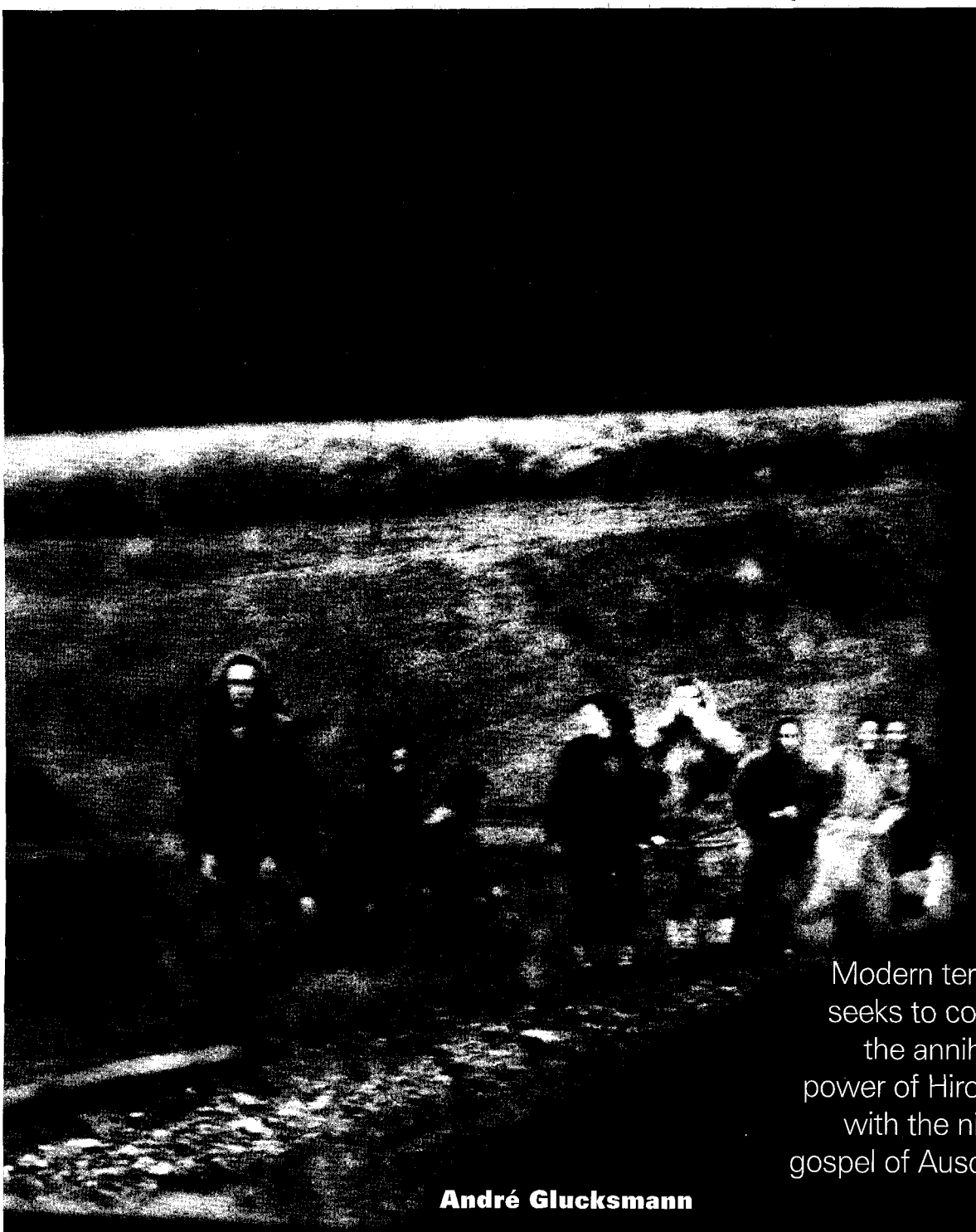

Modern terrorism seeks to combine the annihilating power of Hiroshima with the nihilistic gospel of Auschwitz.

André Glucksmann

With what measureless naivety has the twenty-first-century democratic citizen managed to be surprised when hate breaks down his door? He has—along with his father and his father's father—witnessed, directly or indirectly, wars, murderous revolutions, and the genocides that were the last century's specialty. How could he believe

STANLEY GREENE/NOOR

Terrorism is aggression against unarmed civilians like these Chechnyan villagers, survivors of a 1995 massacre by Russian soldiers.

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himself immune? "Not here, not me," he told himself. But then, on September 11, 2001, Americans saw several thousand of their own assassinated, for no reason. There they were, unsuspecting, in their usual places, at work or at a café, white, black, and yellow, housewife and banker, when they suddenly realized that they were targets of an indiscriminate, merciless will to kill.

A pitiless new day is dawning. The powers of the inhuman and the efficacy of hatreds mutate dangerously. A generation that worked diligently to tame the threat of nuclear war finds itself driven toward a horizon more frightening to contemplate than the one it dreamed of avoiding. Now it must try again to think the unthinkable, to leave the era of the H-bomb and enter the time of the human bomb.

Barely two generations separate us from the shock of Hiroshima, whose terrifying force we have tried over the decades to neutralize. At the time, overcome by the unprecedented event, Jean-Paul Sartre, along with many others, described a fundamental break in history: "The community that has made itself the custodian of the atomic bomb is above the natural realm, since it is responsible for life and death: it will now be necessary that each day, each minute, it consent to live." Irreversibly endowed with the power to blow up the world, mankind became defined by its capacity for universal homicide, and thus for suicide. The previously unimaginable capacity to put an end to the human adventure remained the privilege first of a single nuclear power, then of two, and then of seven.

But soon, people grew used to the new condition. Coexistence on the edge of the cliff, a balance of terror, seemed more and more reasonable. The prospect of mutual annihilation for the rival powers chilled bellicose passions. Five billion vaguely concerned men and women attended to their affairs and delegated—democratically or not—the ultimate care for their survival to a small number of political leaders. For half a century, we fashioned our peace, both external and internal, according to Sartre's fragile axiom: "The atomic bomb is not available to just anyone; the crazy person [who unleashed Armageddon] would have to be a Hitler."

Great confusion understandably resulted when this certainty disintegrated before our eyes, exploded by human bombs in Manhattan. An annihilating power is available today, or will soon be available, to just about anyone; the destructive will of an enemy without borders, equivalent to Nazi dreams, targets civilians: this combination amounts to a do-it-yourself Hitler kit. How can one make sense of, how can one neutralize, a human bomb?

The history of our last 100 years consists of a number of unexpected ruptures, of which September 11 is the most recent. Revelations so powerful as to rob us of breath have confronted us with the scorched face of a human condition too troubling, too overwhelming, to perceive during ordinary times. Rare but decisive moments of truth have short-circuited current opinions. Respected traditions have yielded to the greater strength of a searing realization. The events broke out like lightning in a calm sky, like the storm before the shipwreck.

These poor metaphors inadequately represent the irresistible enthusiasm of August 1914, which plunged Belle Époque Europe—enlightened, unaware, and tranquil—into the abyss. The declaration of war, the unexpected zeal, the joyful mobilization on all sides—in the end, these overturned the material, economic, and social foundations of the old continent, wounding civilians in their flesh and in their spirit, shaking their convictions and their faith. But this amazing reversal of values came to light only after the fact, little by little. In 1915, Freud, among the first to describe it, unveiled the prodigious "disappointment" or "disillusion" of the war, a war that rejected "all the restrictions pledged in times of peace." The "blind rage" that our civilizations unknowingly harbored "hurls down . . . whatever bars its way, as though there were to be no future and no peace after it is over." The inventor of psychoanalysis detected at the heart of the human condition a "death wish," burrowing silently beneath the pleasure principle, the musical and deceptive call of Eros.

Four years later, the peace treaties were signed but nothing was settled. Those who insisted on

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worshiping at the altar of soporific right thinking—those who thought that conflict had become obsolete—were swept away in less than 20 years. "The asses!" whispered France's prime minister, Édouard Daladier, after winning a plebiscite for saving the "peace" by backing down from Nazi Germany; he had expected—wanted—to lose. The upheaval of World War I had produced only partial truths; history would repeat its tragic warnings more harshly still.

World War II was hardly over when the need to think through its horrors—Auschwitz, the atom bomb, millions dead—became pressing. *Les Temps Modernes, the* journal for European intellectuals after the war, set the tone for a whole generation, at least until disagreements between its founding editors, Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, tore it apart. Even in its first issue, in 1945, Merleau-Ponty showed scant respect for the sleepwalking intellectual elders who had guided his studies: "We knew that the concentration camps existed, that the Jews were persecuted, but these certainties belonged to the universe of thought. We did not yet live in the presence of the cruelty of death; we had never confronted the alternative of submitting to them or confronting them." Sartre, a few pages removed, was no more sanguine: "We believed without proof that peace was the natural state and the substance of the universe, that war was only a temporary agitation on its surface. Today, we recognize our error: the end of war was merely the end of *this* war."

"On 9/11, Americans suddenly realized that they were targets of an indiscriminate, merciless will to kill."

It is doubtful whether these authors' writings and commitments after 1945 truly addressed the radicality of the existential problem that they raised here. Indeed, twice in one century, unprecedented conflicts drove a kind of questioning that turned out to be more important, more profound than the answers that intellectual elites dispensed to prove their innocence and to comfort fragile souls. The answers camouflaged the truth. The questioning, by contrast, reflected the true image—scrambled and torn—of man reduced to nothing.

Western universities had for two centuries taken pride in responding in Enlightened terms to critical questions: What can one know? What must one do? For what may one hope? These were, according to Immanuel Kant, three different ways—learned, moral, and religious—to formulate the question of questions: What is man? After 1918, and still more after 1945, the idea of man became equivocal. In the dark light of mass graves that assumed an increasingly planetary scale, other questions took priority: What about the *in*humanity of man? About what is it necessary to despair?

The European conflict offered not just the truth of the man in uniform but that of man stripped naked—the truth of man purged of the illusions of guaranteed peace, whether a Roman or a modern peace, an internal or an external one. Terrible ordeals tear individuals from their false shelters and rose-colored dreams, summoning society to face the hardness of reality. In the best case, Aeschylus teaches, the lesson enables one to move from passion to reason, or, more precisely, from the experience of suffering to the knowledge of that experience. This tragic understanding consists of awareness of the human condition and of its limits.

More often, though, one runs up against the limits of awareness. The worst of the storm has barely passed, and one is busy "moving on"—renovating dead-end roads, regilding the clocks of Cloud-Cuckoo-Land. We turn away from reality and its truths, which are neither easy to live with nor pleasant to talk about. Before long, repression is complete.

Will repression overtake us again as we get further from the revelation of 9/11? "Who is a

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terrorist?" we increasingly hear. The despot or invader says: Terrorists are all those who take part in irregular warfare, led by nonuniformed combatants against those in uniform. This was Napoleon's definition as he engaged Spanish and Russian guerrillas; and the Nazis' as they hunted down resistance movements.

A better definition of terrorism is a deliberate attack by armed men on unarmed civilians. Terrorism is aggression against civilians *as* civilians, inevitably taken by surprise and defenseless. Whether the hostage-takers and killers of innocents are in uniform or not, or what kind of weapons they use—whether bombs or blades—does not change anything; neither does the fact that they may appeal to sublime ideals. The only thing that counts is the intention to wipe out random victims. The systematic resort to the car bomb, to suicide attacks, randomly killing as many passersby as possible, defines a specific style of engagement. When, after Saddam Hussein's fall, terrorist attacks multiplied in Iraq, they spared no one, especially not Iraqis: schoolchildren in buses or on sidewalks, men and women at the market, the faithful at prayer.

When the naive, the falsely naive, and the downright evil blur categories in support of their ideological prejudices and christen the killer of innocents a "resistance fighter," more lucid minds disclose a different landscape. Consider an editorial published in a Lebanese paper on August 20, 2003, the day after a bomb-laden cement truck destroyed the United Nations' center of operations in Baghdad: "Yesterday's operation against the Baghdad headquarters of the United Nations exemplifies this mentality of destruction. Expel all mediators. Banish every international organization. Let things collapse. Let electricity and water be cut off, and the pumping of oil cease. Let theft prevail. Let universities and schools close. Let businesses fail. Let civic life cease. And at the end of the day the occupation will fail. 'No!' protests Joseph Samara, 'at the end of the road, there will be a catastrophe for Iraq. . . . The attack against the United Nations' headquarters in Baghdad belongs to another world: it is a form of nihilism, of absurdity, and of chaos hiding behind fallacious slogans, which proves the convergence among those responsible for this action, their intellectual limitation and their criminal behavior.'"

We have entered another world. The threat of a new Ground Zero, small or great, advances behind a mask. The human bomb claims the power to strike anywhere, by any means, at any time, spreading his nocturnal threat over the globe, invisible and thus unpredictable, clandestine and thus untraceable. The terrorist without borders makes us think about him always, everywhere. Without an accidental delay on the tracks—just a few minutes—the pulverization of two trains in Madrid, at the Atocha station, would have claimed 10,000 victims, three times more than in Manhattan. Then there was London. Whose turn is next? Each of us waits for the next explosion.

The business of terrorists, after all, is to terrorize—so said Lenin, an uncontested master in the field. The ultimate refinement lies in the inversion of responsibility. Operating instructions: I take hostages, I cut off their heads, I show them on video; those who beg for mercy must address themselves to their governments, who alone are to blame for my crimes: my hubris is their problem. The less the terrorist's restraint, the more he causes fear and the sooner you will yield in tears, or so he believes.

Recall the cries of hostage Nick Berg, agonizing as his torturers persisted laboriously over his bent body. "You know, when we behead someone, we enjoy it," one of them informs us. "We did not kidnap to frighten those we hold," another corrects him, "but to put pressure on the countries that help or might help the Americans. . . . It is not a good thing to decapitate, but it is a method that works. In a fight, Americans tremble. . . . Besides, I tried to negotiate an exchange of prisoners for Nick Berg. It was the Americans who refused. They are the ones truly responsible for his death." Terrorist hubris bases its arguments on uncontrollable drives: I can't help myself—give up! A similar strategy shows up on playgrounds: Stop me or I'll do something terrible! The terrorist refines this rationale; he draws out his pleasure, prolongs

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The threat of mutually assured destruction kept states from unleashing another Hiroshima . . .

death, cuts the throat slowly, goes beyond physical torture.

To resurrect the dead, if only by video, in order to execute them a second time: this compulsion prolongs war infinitely from the other side of life. It is pure hatred. A traditional war, however savage, comes to an end. Terrorist war, given over to limitless fury, knows no ceasefire. For the demonstration of force it substitutes the demonstration of hatred, which, nourished by its own atrocities, becomes inextinguishable.

Nowhere is this demonstration more visible than in Iraq. For a long time, the mental sin of Western armies was to dive into a new conflict as if they were fighting the previous war. This weakness now affects pundits and politicians, who reproach the U.S. for getting bogged down in "another Vietnam." But Zarqawi was not Ho Chi Minh. No geopolitical fact permits us to impose the framework of the last great hot war of the cold war on the current situation in Iraq. Every month, thousands of Iraqis fall, indiscriminate victims of terror—over 500 peaceful Iraqi Yezidis on August 14 of this year, in the deadliest terrorist attack since September 11—while the total number of American soldiers killed in four years is approximately 3,600. In Iraq, then, what rages is a war of terror against civilians, not a war of independence against an occupying foreign army and its indigenous military supporters. Vietnam is far away; those who miss Woodstock forget that the world has changed in 40 years.

What threatens Iraqi society is not Vietnamization but Somalization. Recall Operation Restore Hope, in which an international force, led by Americans, disembarked in Mogadishu in 1993, seeking to ensure the survival of a population that was starving and being massacred by rival clans. After losing 19 in a horrific trap, the GIs left. The rest is well known. An angry President Clinton swore "never again," and a year later refused to intervene in Rwanda, where 5,000 blue helmets would have been enough to

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interrupt the genocide that wiped out as many as 1 million Tutsi in three months.

The Somalian model has spread across the planet, from the Congo to chaotic East Timor to Afghanistan, where the Taliban have violently resurfaced, to Iraq. Populations are taken hostage, terrorized, and sacrificed, the spoils of wars by local gangsters. Under various pretexts—religion, ethnicity, makeshift racist or nationalist ideology—commandos contend for power at the point of AK-47s. They fight against unarmed populations; most of their victims are women and children. Terrorism is not the prerogative of Islamists alone: the targeting of civilians has been used by a regular army and by militias under the command of the Kremlin in Chechnya, where the capital city of Grozny was razed to the ground. Where the killers appeal to the Koran, it is still primarily Muslim passersby who suffer. Algeria, Somalia, and Darfur (at least 200,000 dead and millions of refugees in just a few years, with the Sudanese government, protected by China and Russia, acting with impunity) are live laboratories of the abomination of abominations: war against civilians.

Between 1945 and 1989, the war between Eastern and Western blocs was a cold one, in Europe as in North America. Everywhere else, however, there were outbreaks of revolution and counter-revolution, coups d'états and massacres. Never before were human societies so shaken as during that brief half-century, in which colonial empires crumbled, but in which, all too often, the uprisings, insurrections, and wars of liberation gave birth to new despotisms. Centuries-old regimes, customs, and bonds were destroyed. As a result of this world-historical earthquake, two-thirds of the globe's population lost its bearings. These people can no longer live as before. Nor can they—yet, says the optimist—exist as tranquil citizens of Western-style liberal democracies.

Across the world, breeding grounds have as a consequence formed for young and not-so-young warriors, who—uniformed or not—prove equally eager to conquer homes, women, and wealth, equally ready to use machine guns or mortars to take control of the countryside or to use car bombs or human bombs to dominate urban slums. Ambitious and unscrupulous forces readily exploit these breeding grounds, sponsoring diverse terrorist groups to gain power.

The war unleashed this process in Iraq. Would it have been better, therefore, not to have overthrown Saddam Hussein and to have allowed him another decade to complete his horrible record of tortures, mutilations, and corpses—1 or 2 million victims in a quarter-century? The Iraqis, despite the threat of murder, have gone to the polls three times, en masse; they do not seem to regret the dictator's fall. Should the GIs and their allies now withdraw, as in Somalia? Even some anti-American governments must cross their fingers against the possibility of abandoning the terrain to the beheaders.

The fight to avoid the Somalization of the planet is just beginning, and it will probably dominate the twenty-first century. If they resist the sirens of isolationism, Americans will learn from their mistakes. Europe will either resolve to help them or abandon itself to the care of the petro-czar Vladimir Putin, who stands ready to police the old continent, while preaching antiterrorist terrorism, with his devastation of Chechnya as a case in point. The borderless challenge of emancipated warriors allows us little leisure for procrastination.

Astrophysicists have found, wandering in the starry expanse, certain black holes. When faraway stars come into contact with them, the stars disappear, along with their planets, swallowed by bottomless darkness. From the beginning, human civilizations have existed alongside analogous moral abysses, which foreshadow an end of all things. According to tradition, such annihilation suggests a jealous and vengeful divinity, or malevolent demons.

In their endeavor to understand the black holes that threaten societies, the inventors of Western philosophy, comparing them to natural cataclysms, earthquakes, volcanoes, and epidemics, refused to see in them a supernatural sanction or to deny the responsibility of mortals. If God is not a cause, the darkness that threatens to overtake humanity is human, irreducible to an impersonal fate. The destructive principle inheres in us, whether we know it or not—this is

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the persistent message of the tragedians. Hate moves like Thucydides's plague, not a purely physiological condition but an essentially mental disorder, which takes over bodies, minds, and society. The idea of a contagion of hatred must be taken literally: hatred spreads hatred, an outbreak that inoculates itself against all who oppose it.

Maybe one day, we will view the last century with nostalgia, even if it was dealt Auschwitz and Hiroshima. For today's terrorism strives to mix these two ingredients into new cocktails of horror. During the cold war, the threat to man was dual: one, between two blocs, involved reciprocal annihilation; the other, terrorist, confined the savage extermination of civilian populations to the interior of each camp. Today, global terrorism eliminates geostrategic borders and traditional taboos. The last seconds of the condemned of Manhattan, of Atocha, and of the London Underground sent us two messages: "Here abandon all hope," the Dantesque injunction carried by a bomb that wipes the slate clean; and "Here there is no reason why," the nihilist gospel of SS officers. Hiroshima signified the technical possibility of a desert that approaches closer and closer to the absolute; Auschwitz represented the deliberate and lucid pursuit of total annihilation. The conjunction of these two forms of the will to nothingness looms in the black holes of modern hatred.

ABID KATIB/GETTY IMAGES

. . . but no such concerns restrain an enemy without borders.

Imre Kertész was twice a survivor, once from the death camps and then again from Communism; saved by literature, he was Hungary's first Nobel Prize winner. He writes: "Some day we should analyze the mass of resentments that bring the contemporary mind to scorn reason; we should undertake an intellectual history of the hatred of the intellect." The various forms of racism, chauvinism, fanaticism, and the apparent rebirth of an aggression that was thought to be a thing of the past surprise us. Should we not be surprised at our surprise? The understandable but wrongheaded choice to sleep peacefully, whatever the price, puts us all in jeopardy.

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Britain's Anti-Semitic Turn

A new manifestation of the oldest hatred demonizes the Jewish state.

Melanie Phillips

In August 2006, as the war in Lebanon raged, a gang of teenage girls confronted 12-year-old Jasmine Kranat and a friend on a London bus. "Are you Jewish?" they demanded. They didn't hurt the friend, who was wearing a crucifix. But they subjected Jasmine, a Jew, to a brutal beating—stomping on her head and chest, fracturing her eye socket, and knocking her unconscious.

According to the Community Security Trust, the defense organization of Britain's 300,000-strong Jewish community, last year saw nearly 600 anti-Semitic assaults, incidents of vandalism, cases of abuse, and threats against Jewish individuals and institutions—double the 2001 number. According to the police, Jews are four times more likely to be attacked because of their religion than are Muslims. Every synagogue service and Jewish communal event now requires guards on the lookout for violence from both neo-Nazis and Muslim extremists. Orthodox Jews have become particular targets; some have begun wearing baseball caps instead of skullcaps and concealing their Star of David jewelry.

Anti-Semitism is rife within Britain's Muslim community. Islamic bookshops sell copies of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and the notorious czarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; as an undercover TV documentary revealed in January, imams routinely preach anti-Jewish sermons. Opinion polls show that nearly two-fifths of Britain's Muslims believe that the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target "as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East"; that more than half believe that British Jews have "too much influence over the direction of UK foreign policy"; and that no fewer than 46 percent think that the Jewish community is "in league with Freemasons to control the media and politics."

But anti-Semitism has also become respectable in mainstream British society. "Anti-Jewish themes and remarks are gaining acceptability in some quarters in public and private discourse in Britain and there is a danger that this trend will become more and more mainstream," reported a Parliamentary inquiry last year. "It is this phenomenon that has contributed to an atmosphere where Jews have become more anxious and more vulnerable to

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Traditional anti-Semitism: a sixteenth-century image of a Jew conjuring the devil from a pot of blood drained from a child

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abuse and attack than at any other time for a generation or longer."

At the heart of this ugly development is a new variety of anti-Semitism, aimed primarily not at the Jewish religion, and not at a purported Jewish race, but at the Jewish state. Zionism is now a dirty word in Britain, and opposition to Israel has become a fig leaf for a resurgence of the oldest hatred.

Anti-Semitism has continually changed its shape over the centuries. In the Greco-Roman world, it expressed itself in cultural hostility, resentment of the Jews' economic power, and disdain for the separate lives that Jews led as the result of their religious practices, such as dietary laws and refusal to marry outside the faith.

Adding fuel to these pagan prejudices, Christian theology accused Jews of deicide and held them responsible for all time for killing Christ, a position that effectively associated them with the devil and, crucially, laid the blame for their suffering on their own shoulders. Later, medieval Christianity attempted to usurp the Jewish heritage through "replacement theology," which claimed that Christians inherited all the promises that God had made to the Jews, who were to be eliminated through either conversion or death. These ideas underlay medieval Europe's regular anti-Jewish pogroms, which consisted of massacres, forced conversions, and torchings of synagogues.

Theological anti-Semitism's themes reemerged in the next mutation: racial anti-Semitism. This ideology held that, on account of their genetic inheritance, Jews were the enemies of humanity—a demonic conspiracy whose malign influence could be countered only by removing them from the face of the earth. Nazi Germany tried to do just that, killing 6 million Jews between 1933 and 1945.

And now, in Britain and elsewhere, anti-Semitism has mutated again, its target shifting from culture to creed to race to nation. What anti-Semitism once did to Jews as people, it now does to Jews as *a* people. First it wanted the Jewish religion, and then the Jews themselves, to disappear; now it wants the Jewish state to disappear. For the presentation of Israel in British public discourse does not consist of mere criticism. It has become a torrent of libels, distortions, and obsessional vilification, representing Israel not as a country under exterminatory attack by the Arabs for the 60 years of its existence but as a regional bully persecuting innocent Palestinians who want only a homeland.

Language straight out of the lexicon of medieval and Nazi Jew-hatred has become commonplace in acceptable British discourse, particularly in the media. Indeed, the most striking evidence that hatred of Israel is the latest mutation of anti-Semitism is that it resurrects the libel of the world Jewish conspiracy, a defining anti-Semitic motif that went underground after the Holocaust.

Take the much-abused term "neoconservatives," which has become code for the Jews who have supposedly suborned America in Israel's interests. In the *Guardian*, Geoffrey Wheatcroft lamented the fact that Conservative Party leader David Cameron had fallen under the spell of neoconservatives' "ardent support for the Iraq war, for the US and for Israel," and urged Cameron to ensure that British foreign policy was no longer based on the interest of "another country"—Israel. In the *Times*, Simon Jenkins supported the notion that "a small group of neo-conservatives contrived to take the greatest nation on Earth to war and kill thousands of people" and that these "traitors to the American conservative tradition," whose "first commitment was to the defence of Israel," had achieved a "seizure of Washington (and London) after 9/11." According to this familiar thesis, the Jews covertly exercise their extraordinary power to advance their own interests and harm the rest of mankind.

The New Statesman took a more straightforward approach in 2002, printing an investigation into the power of the "Zionist" lobby in Britain, which it dubbed the "Kosher Conspiracy" and illustrated on its cover with a gold Star of David piercing the Union Jack. The image conveyed at a glance the message that rich Jews were stabbing British interests through the national heart.

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The British media accuse Israel of a host of crimes. The *Guardian* published a two-day special report painting Israel as an apartheid state, ignoring the fact that Israeli Arabs have full civil rights. Another *Guardian* article, by Patrick Seale, portrayed Israel's incursions into Gaza as a "destructive rampage." Dismissing or ignoring the rocket attacks, hostage-taking, and terrorism that those incursions were trying to stop, Seale concluded instead that Israel "deliberately inflicts inhumane hardships on the Palestinians in order to radicalise them and drive the moderates from the scene." When the National Union of Journalists, joining a number of other academic and professional groups, voted last April to boycott Israeli goods—a move that it has since reversed—one of its members, freelancer Pamela Hardyment, described Israel as "a wonderful Nazi-like killing machine backed by the world's richest Jews." Then she referred to the "so-called Holocaust" and concluded: "Shame on all Jews, may your lives be cursed."

"'Neoconservatives' has become code for the Jews who have supposedly suborned America in Israel's interests."

The British media uncritically regurgitate Palestinian propaganda even when it is demonstrably false. In April 2002, many outlets labeled Israel's assault on the refugee camp in Jenin a "massacre" with thousands dead; in fact, some 52 Palestinian men had died (of whom the great majority were terrorists), along with 23 Israeli soldiers. In last year's Lebanon war, the media propagated manifestly false Hezbollah claims of Israeli massacres that later proved to have been staged.

During the same war, the *Guardian* published a cartoon depicting a huge fist, armed with brass knuckles shaped like Stars of David, hammering a bloody child while a wasp representing Hezbollah buzzed around ineffectually. The image suggested that Israel was a gigantic oppressor, slaughtering children in brutal overreaction to Hezbollah, a minor irritant. It was reminiscent of an earlier cartoon in the *Independent* that showed a monstrous Ariel Sharon biting the head off a Palestinian baby, which won first prize in the British Political Cartoon Society's annual competition for 2003. By showing Jews killing children, both cartoons employed the imagery of the blood libel—the medieval European calumny that sparked many massacres of Jews by claiming that they murdered Gentile children and used their blood for religious rituals.

The BBC, despite its claims of fairness and honesty, is just as marked by hatred of Israel, and much more influential. It reported the Lebanon war by focusing almost entirely on the Israeli assault upon Lebanon, with scarcely a nod at the Hezbollah rocket barrage against Israel. Its reporters blame Israel even for Palestinians' killing of other Palestinians. Last December, in a briefing for other BBC staff, Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen wrote of the incipient Palestinian civil war in Gaza: "The reason is the death of hope, caused by a cocktail of Israel's military activities, land expropriation and settlement building—and the financial sanctions imposed on the Hamas led government."

Some media websites publish readers' anti-Semitic comments. On the *Guardian*'s Comment Is Free blog—which does try to remove some of the more offensive remarks—one reader wrote: "Because of their religious teachings whenever Jews have had power they have used it to persecute non-Jews—from the extermination of Amalek to the killing of Christian converts, to the oppression of medieval peasantry in Poland to the Palestinians today." A message board on BBC Radio Five Live's website published a reader's remark that "Zionism is a racist ideology where jews [*sic*] are given supremacy over all other races and faiths. This is found in the Talmud." Though the site reserves the right not to post messages that are "racist, sexist, homophobic, sexually explicit, abusive or otherwise objectionable,"

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For the Nazis, the "Jewish race" was the enemy of humanity.

it refused to remove that posting, which apparently "did not contravene the house rules."

Another force propagating the new anti-Semitism is the institution at the heart of the old theological version: the Church, which has reverted to blaming Jews for their own suffering and accusing them once again of a diabolical conspiracy against the innocent. Although Britain is in many ways a postreligious society, it still sees the churches as custodians of high-minded conscience and truth. And those churches are viscerally prejudiced against Israel.

The Church of England is especially unfriendly; one might say that it is the *Guardian* at prayer. In a lecture in 2001, the archbishop of Canterbury's representative in the Middle East, Canon Andrew White, observed with concern that propaganda accusing Israel of ethnic cleansing and of systematically "Judaising" Jerusalem had assumed great authority within the Church of England. The Church, he said, was undergoing not just a spell of Israel-hatred but also a revival of theological anti-Semitism.

One major influence here is radical Palestinian Christian theology, such as that of Canon Naim Ateek, which revives the imagery of Christ-killing in order to claim that the Palestinians are the rightful inheritors of God's promise of the Land of Israel. Another is the prominent Reverend Stephen Sizer, who has said that Israel is fundamentally an apartheid state, that he hopes that it will be "brought to an end," and that Christianity has inherited God's promises to the Jews. Sizer agrees with another leading Anglican, Reverend Dr. John Stott, that the idea that Jews still have a special relationship with God is "biblically anathema." And Colin Chapman's book *Whose Promised Land?*—hugely influential within the Church—likewise says that God's promises to the Jews now pertain to the Christians, adding that violence has always been implicit in Zionism and that Jewish self-determination is somehow racist.

Small wonder, then, that Christian aid societies regularly represent Israel as a malevolent

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occupying power, distorting Jews' historical claims to the land and making scant reference to the sustained campaign of Arab terrorism against them. A 2005 report by the Anglican Peace and Justice Network—which underpinned a short-lived move to "divest" from companies supporting Israel—compared Israel's security barrier with "the barbed-wire fence of the Buchenwald camp." Jews were apparently like Nazis—and because of a measure aimed at preventing a second Jewish Holocaust. Last Christmas, several Anglican and Catholic churches replaced their traditional nativity tableaux with montages of Israel's security barrier, carrying the unmistakable message that the Palestinians were the modern version of the suffering Christ being crucified all over again by the Jews. And earlier this year, the Catholic weekly *The Tablet* revealed that almost 80 percent of British Christians polled did not believe that Israel was fighting enemies that were pledged to destroy it.

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"Leftists and Islamists now march together under such slogans as 'We are all Hezbollah' and even 'Death to the Jews.'"

Like the media and the churches, Britain's political and academic Left is making common cause with Islamist radicalism. The Islamists oppose the Left's most deeply held causes, such as gay rights and equality for women. Yet leftists and Islamists now march together under such slogans as "We are all Hezbollah now" during rallies protesting the Lebanon war, and even "Death to the Jews" outside a debate over whether Manchester University's Jewish Society should be banned.

In 2005, London's far-left mayor, Ken Livingstone, illustrated this unholy alliance by publicly embracing Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, the cleric who endorses suicide bombings in Israel and Iraq. In the same year, he asked a Jewish reporter who approached him after a party, "What did you do before? Were you a German war criminal?" When the reporter said that he was Jewish and that the remark offended him, Livingstone likened him to a "concentration camp guard." After a government panel found that Livingstone had brought his office into disrepute, the mayor challenged the finding in court, where a judge ruled that his remarks were not anti-Semitic. But the Community Security Trust found that a number of perpetrators of anti-Semitic attacks mentioned those comments. And John Mann, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee Against Antisemitism, was in no doubt: "If you have people like the Mayor of London crossing the line . . . then it gives a message out to the rest of the community. That is why antisemitism is on the rise again—because it's become acceptable."

Livingstone is not the only leftist politician "crossing the line." In 2003, Labour backbencher Tam Dalyell claimed that Tony Blair was "being unduly influenced by a cabal of Jewish advisers." Liberal Democrat Jenny Tonge, whose party honored her with a peerage after she sympathized with suicide bombers and compared Arabs in Gaza with Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, told her party conference in 2006: "The pro-Israel lobby has got its grips on the Western world. I think they've probably got a certain grip on our party."

Even a distinguished general told me, without a shred of evidence, that Rupert Murdoch had ordered the *Times*, which he owns, to limit its opposition to the Iraq War "on the instruction of the Jewish lobby in America." Furthermore, claimed the general, George Bush had invaded Iraq because "he had Ariel Sharon's hand up his back." Moreover, a number of institutions and professional groups have tried to launch boycotts of Israel: academics, journalists, architects, doctors, public-sector unions, and again the Church of England. Many of these have not succeeded, but they have served to remind the public that Israel is a pariah.

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Last year, Britain saw nearly 600 anti-Semitic assaults, incidents of vandalism, and other threats against Jewish people and institutions.

Given these views, widespread in the media and among political and intellectual elites, it's no surprise that many Britons believe that global Islamic terrorism is the result of Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians—or that hatred of both the Jewish state and Jews in general has become increasingly acceptable among the population. As a woman said to me conversationally at dinner one evening: "I hate the Jews because of what they do to the Palestinians." So acceptable has the new anti-Semitism become that many left-wing Jews promulgate the idea that Israel is a racist or apartheid state, demonize those Jews who seek to defend it against slander, and claim that because they are Jews themselves, their words cannot be anti-Semitic—despite the fact that throughout history there have been Jews who have turned on their coreligionists.

One of the most conspicuous features of British anti-Semitism is that the British deny its existence. The Parliamentary inquiry received only a muted response. Both Mann and Richard Littlejohn, a journalist whose TV program on the subject aired in July 2007, encountered people who, when discovering their concern about anti-Semitism, said: "Oh, I didn't know you were Jewish." But Mann and Littlejohn aren't Jewish. As Littlejohn noted, the implication was that no non-Jew would ever identify anti-Semitism, and therefore that anti-Semitism was generally a figment of the Jewish imagination. When I proposed to write a book about it, I was turned down by every mainstream publishing house. "No British publisher will touch this," one editorial director told me. "Claiming there is anti-Semitism in Britain is simply unsayable."

Many Britons deny the resurgence of anti-Semitism because they think of it as prejudice toward Jews as *people* and believe that it died with Hitler. The argument that attitudes toward Israel may be anti-Semitic strikes them as absurd. But consider the characteristics of anti-Semitism. It applies to the Jews expectations applied to no

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other people; it libels, vilifies, demonizes, and dehumanizes them; it scapegoats them not merely for crimes that they have not committed, but for crimes of which they are the victims; it holds them responsible for all the ills of the world. These characteristics remain precisely the same in today's hatred of the Jewish state. Israel is held to standards expected of no other nation; it is libeled and vilified; it is blamed both for crimes that it has not committed and for those of which it is the victim; and it is held responsible for all the world's misfortunes—most recently, Islamic terrorism.

So the Israel boycotts that have broken out in Britain are intrinsically anti-Semitic. The boycotters do not seek to cut ties with any other country, however tyrannical or murderous. They blame no other country for populations that have been displaced through war or other upheavals. And they expect no other nation that has held off its mortal enemies to defer to those aggressors and accede to their demands.

Britons also tend to suspect that Jews use the charge of anti-Semitism to divert attention from Israel's crimes. This is why, for so many in Britain, the suggestion that anti-Semitism is enjoying a renaissance seems not only false but sinister. Outraged to be accused of peddling bigotry, they begin to hate those who level that charge—who, they conclude, are part of a conspiracy against truth.

Thus Jews who seek to defend Israel find themselves in a trap. By complaining that attacks on Israel are anti-Semitic, they become examples of the supposed Jewish tendency to play the anti-Semitism card to suppress legitimate debate—and provoke yet more of the very prejudice that they are trying to combat. Such Jews find themselves in a situation that Kafka could have scripted. *The Economist* hosted a 2004 debate in London proposing that "the enemies of anti-semitism are the new McCarthyites" because they were trying to suppress legitimate criticism of Israel. And at that debate, a former Conservative higher-education minister and a member of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding stated that any British Jew who supported Israel's policies was guilty of "dual loyalty." I myself, on the BBC's *Question Time* in 2001, was accused of dual loyalty for the same reason.

Insofar as Britons are forced to acknowledge a rise in anti-Semitism, they assume that Jews have brought it on themselves because of Israel's behavior. There is certainly a link: whenever Middle East violence surges, as in the 2006 Lebanon war or at the height of the second intifada, physical attacks on British Jews surge, too. Since violence in the Middle East invariably consists of attacks on Israel to which it is forced to respond, the appalling conclusion is that the more Jews are murdered in Israel, the more Jews are attacked in Britain.

Not all Britons who oppose Israel are anti-Semites, of course. Many are decent people who hate prejudice. Indeed, that is why they hate Israel—because they have been taught that it is like apartheid-era South Africa. Profoundly ignorant of the history of the Jewish people and of the Middle East, they have been indoctrinated with one of the Big Lies of human history. And it is because of their very high-mindedness that the better educated and more socially progressive they are, the more likely they are to spew Jew-hatred.

But why has this poison seeped into the British bloodstream? Why has the country that was once the cradle of the Enlightenment values of tolerance, objectivity, and reason departed so precipitately from its own tradition?

For one thing, Britain has always had an ambivalent relationship with the Jews. Medieval England actually led the European charge against them. The blood libel is thought to have originated in twelfth-century England; and in 1290, after numerous pogroms against its Jewish citizens, it expelled them altogether. It was not until 1656 that, for a variety of economic and religious reasons, Oliver Cromwell allowed Jews to return to England. Though they subsequently flourished there, a measure of social anti-Semitism persisted until the Holocaust.

Britain's role in the creation of modern Israel is also a factor in British antagonism toward the Jewish state. In the early 1920s, the League of Nations entrusted Britain with the administration

HOWARD DAVIES/CORBIS

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of Palestine, holding it responsible for "placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home." For almost three decades, the British tried to evade that obligation in order to appease the Arabs. The Jews of Palestine thus found themselves fighting the British as well as the Arabs, a fact that caused lasting resentment in Britain. Public opinion recalls with undimmed bitterness the Jewish terrorism of that period, such as the 1946 destruction of the British headquarters at Jerusalem's King David hotel. Arabism is still the default position at the Foreign Office, where sympathetic diplomats are dubbed "the camel corps."

But a subtler reason exists for Britain's embrace of the new anti-Semitism. After the Second World War, the radical Left set out to destroy the fundamentals of Western morality, but its campaign played out very differently in America and Britain. In America, it resulted in the culture wars, with conservatives, many churches, and sensible liberals launching a vigorous counterattack in defense of Western moral values—and, as it happened, Israel.

Exhausted by two world wars, shattered by the loss of empire, and hollowed out by the failure of the Church of England or a substantial body of intellectuals and elites to hold the line, Britain was uniquely vulnerable to the predations of the Left. The institutions that underpinned truth and morality—the traditional family and an education system that transmitted the national culture—collapsed. Britain's monolithic intelligentsia soon embraced postmodernism, multiculturalism, victim culture, and a morally inverted hegemony of ideas in which the values of marginalized or transgressive groups replaced the values of the purportedly racist, oppressive West.

Further, people across the political spectrum became increasingly unable to make moral distinctions based on behavior. This erasing of the line between right and wrong produced a tendency to equate, and then invert, the roles of terrorists and of their victims, and to regard self-defense as aggression and the original violence as understandable and even justified. That attitude is, of course, inherently antagonistic to Israel, which was founded on the determination never to allow another genocide of Jews, to defend itself when attacked, and to destroy those who would destroy it. But for the Left, powerlessness is virtue; better for Jews to die than to kill, because only as dead victims can they be moral.

And this general endorsement of surrender feeds straight into a subterranean but potent resentment simmering in Europe. For over 60 years, a major tendency in European thought has sought to distance itself from moral responsibility for the Holocaust. The only way to do so, however, was somehow to blame the Jews for their own destruction; and that monstrous reasoning was inconceivable while the dominant narrative was of Jews as victims.

Now, however, the Palestinians have handed Europe a rival narrative. The misrepresentation of Israeli self-defense as belligerence, suggesting that Jews are not victims but aggressors, implicitly provides Europeans with the means to blame the destruction of European Jewry on its own misdeeds. As one influential left-wing editor said to me: "The Holocaust meant that for decades the Jews were untouchable. It's such a relief that Israel means we don't have to worry about that any more."

It is no accident that Jews find themselves at the center of Britain's modern convulsion. Today's British prejudices rest on a repudiation of truth and a refusal to defend Western moral values. And it was the Jews who first gave the West those moral codes that underpin its civilization and that are now under siege.

If British politicians were to start speaking the truth about Israel's history and defending Jews publicly, they might help stem the new anti-Semitism. Likewise, British Jews—who, unlike their American counterparts, are almost totally silent for fear of making things worse—need to put their heads above the parapet and start telling the truth about Israel. But for Jews who had allowed themselves to believe that they were truly at home in Britain, the new anti-Semitism is the end of an idyll.

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Moscow: Oil Town

Petrodollars are fueling an unprecedented—but precarious—prosperity in Russia's capital.

Guy Sorman

Those who knew the Soviet Union before 1991 agree that Moscow is a happier place today. In the old days, the city wore a dark, brooding look. People were poor and afraid; the ruble was worthless, though there was nothing to buy anyway. Imperial Moscow boasted two, perhaps three, restaurants, offering meager fare. The only ones to ply a trade were watchmakers, who made their living repairing old watches—a telling sign of the low level of consumption and innovation. Soviet Russia manufactured weapons, and little else.

In just 15 years, Moscow has transformed completely. Restaurants, bars, and hotels overflow with people, day and night. Gilded youth and *nouveaux riches* flaunt their wealth and expensive cars. French and Italian luxury goods adorn the shops on Pushkin Square and Tverskaya Street. The roads, once empty save the occasional official limousine, surge with traffic.

The money from oil, gas, and raw materials is flowing freely, driving this revolution. The biggest gainers, those at the top of the pyramid, are the officials, bureaucrats, and merchants who are part of the export network. Prosperity has trickled down, though, and many Russians have benefited. In 2006, median wages rose by more than 20 percent and the country posted 7 percent growth. Only those living in smaller towns and in the countryside, which still hasn't recovered from the trauma of agricultural privatization during the nineties, have been left out, Yegor Gaidar informs me.

Gaidar, Boris Yeltsin's prime minister in 1992 and the architect of Russian privatization, insists that soaring oil and gas prices aren't the sole reasons for Russia's economic recovery—indeed, he points out, the recovery began before the oil boom, thanks to the Russian spirit of enterprise and the introduction of the free market. Gaidar famously went in for "shock therapy," lightning-swift privatization, rather than gradual change. Russians hold him responsible for the disruptions and poverty of the nineties, though it's unfair to paint him as a villain. He was just the doctor, summoned to do something for an economy in its death throes. His sale of state assets was an attempt at a cure, not the illness.

People tend to forget that Yeltsin had inherited an economy almost wholly dependent on oil. Russia, Gaidar reminds me, could only feed her people by importing food in exchange for oil, a choice made in the twenties after Stalin's collectivization destroyed the country's agriculture. As energy prices plummeted in the eighties, Mikhail Gorbachev drove the country deep into debt to maintain food-subsistence levels. When Yeltsin came to power in 1991, Russia stood on the brink of famine, in no position to pay back her debts. The economy had ground to a halt, and oil production was dwindling. It was only after Gaidar's privatization that production picked up. True, the so-called oligarchs—the well-connected elites of Russia—made a killing, buying state enterprises for a song. Yet they also put the economy back on track. "Their enterprise," says Gaidar, "saved Russia."

So is Russia truly a market economy? "We're almost there," says Arkady Dvorkovitch, President Vladimir Putin's 35-year-old economic advisor. Trained in the United States, he has

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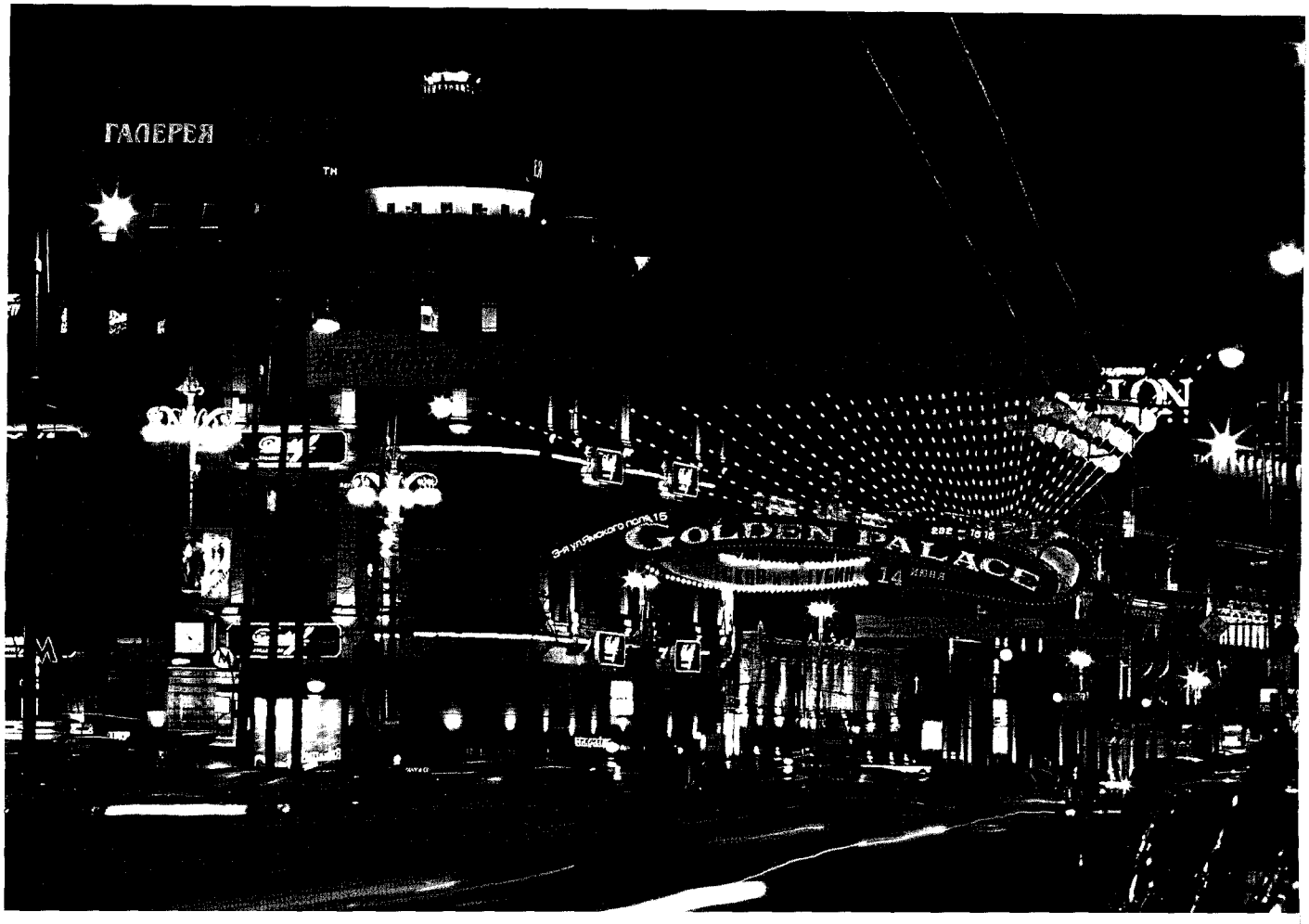

Thriving Tverskaya Street pulses with shops and traffic.

become the icon of the new generation in power. "We still do not have an independent judiciary," he admits, "nor do we have genuine rule of law and officials who apply the rules rather than embezzle funds", "almost there" suddenly seeming quite a ways off.

No business can function in Russia without official protection, or having a "roof," in local parlance. The protection comes at a price, yet foreign investment pours in, proof that, corruption notwithstanding, profits are healthy. Like Gaidar, Dvorkovitch praises the Russian spirit of enterprise. But once you look beyond restaurants, shops, and real estate, I remark, there's little investment: just 20 percent of national wealth. "It will come, things are happening very fast," responds Dvorkovitch. The Russians, he claims, are just beginning to have faith in the stability of the new economy; credit based on predictable rules has only just started. But there's no going back, Dvorkovitch maintains: no one wants a return to socialism. As in the West, the debate is about the role of the state in the market system.

Dvorkovitch would like to see greater market autonomy in investment decisions, rather than the state's making so many major investments. Despite all the privatizing of the nineties, the state is still heavily involved in the economy—and in the energy sector, it has been retaking

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control from private companies, both Russian and international. The national ventures are hardly role models when it comes to investment strategy. State-run energy giant Gazprom, for instance, finds it more lucrative to invest its money in the financial market than to explore for new reserves or improve its technology. "It will happen," asserts Dvorkovitch yet again. "President Putin is keen on investing in new sectors like petrochemicals, food processing, biotechnology, and IT," he adds, doing his best to sound convincing.

"Putin may decree, but nothing happens on the ground," says former finance minister Yevgeny Yasin. The Russian president, he tells me, thinks that it's enough to allocate public money for a sector to develop, as if by magic. Putin has yet to realize that in a market economy, development requires an institutional framework. "There can be no major innovation," Yasin explains, "as long as there is no rule of law and when entrepreneurs who refuse to kowtow to the establishment risk being put behind bars." Yasin calls the surfeit of oil and gas "the resource curse"; it exonerates both the Russian leadership and people from thinking about needed reforms.

How long will the oil boom last? Forever—or that's what the current Russian leadership seems to think. The growth potential of China and India has convinced them that oil prices can only rise further, to Russia's great benefit. When I raise the specter of global warming and the policy response to it, which could result in lower oil and gas consumption, my Russian interlocutors laugh. This is a debate fabricated in the United States, they explain, and it doesn't cut much ice with the Indians and Chinese—and, in any case, Russian climatologists don't subscribe to the global warming theory. "Hasn't Russia ratified the Kyoto Convention on the limiting of greenhouse gases?" I ask. Dvorkovitch is dismissive: it was merely a political gesture.

Economist Vladimir Milov belongs to the same generation as Dvorkovitch, but he chose to leave the government on moral grounds. Unable to accept the high-oil-price way of thinking, Milov spoke his mind, a heroic feat under a regime intolerant of criticism. He succeeded in setting up an energy consultancy, which initiates foreign clients into the mysteries of Russian politics.

"Marxism is very useful in understanding the political life and ideological development of Russia," Milov observes, aware of the irony. According to Marxism, the economic base determines the ideological superstructures. When Putin took office in 1999, Milov points out, energy prices were low, and the president happily adopted a liberal line and left things to civil society. As soon as energy prices began to rise, and it appeared that they would continue rising for a long time, however, Putin started renationalizing parts of the economy, taking over the media, and restoring to the bureaucracy and the FSB (formerly the KGB) all their old powers.

Oil may prop up the Russian economy, but no market can stay on a rising curve forever, Milov concludes. Sooner or later, prices will begin to fall. As things stand, Russia will not be able to cope.

The sale of oil and gas brings in $150 billion every year; arms sales, a mere $6 billion. Is the oil boom a new Russian curse, or a restoration of national sovereignty? Moscow's youth lives it up. But some Russians believe that the KGB has never really left the dreaded Lubianka, the city's dark heart.

In 1991, the people pulled down the statue of Felix Djerzinski, the founder of the KGB. Since then, it has lain on its side in the courtyard of Moscow's Museum of Modern Art, corroded and covered with weeds. In the same museum, a retrospective is devoted to Oleg Kulik, a video artist who epitomizes new Russian art. Kulik became famous after he walked naked on the streets of Moscow, wearing only a necklace, barking or jumping on passersby to lick or bite them. "Today," Kulik says, "Russian artists have complete freedom to do what they want—provided that they don't criticize Putin or the Orthodox Church."

Thus Moscow 2007: newly prosperous, only partially free—and precarious.

JON ARNOLD/AXCORBIS

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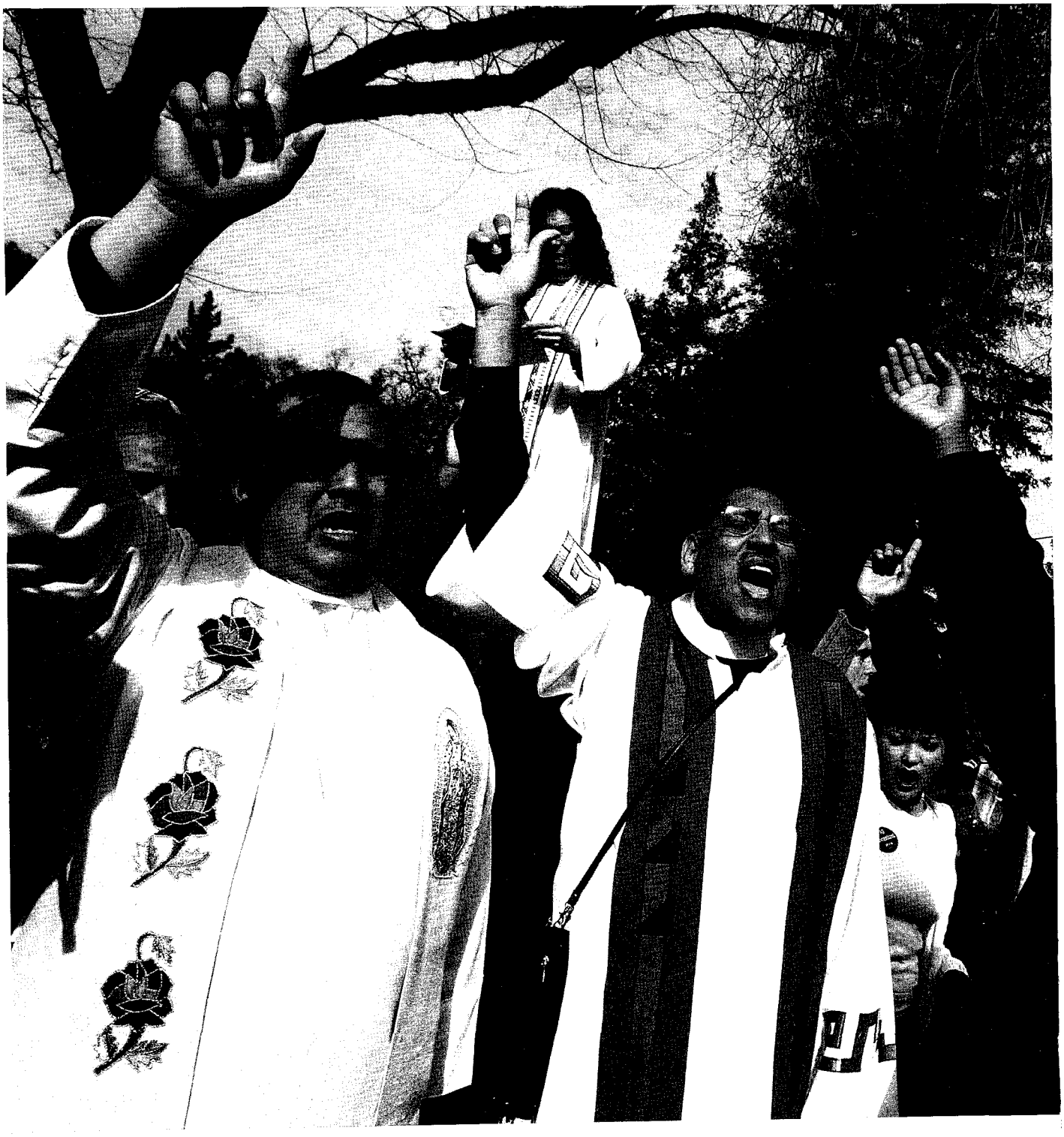
The Religious Left, Reborn



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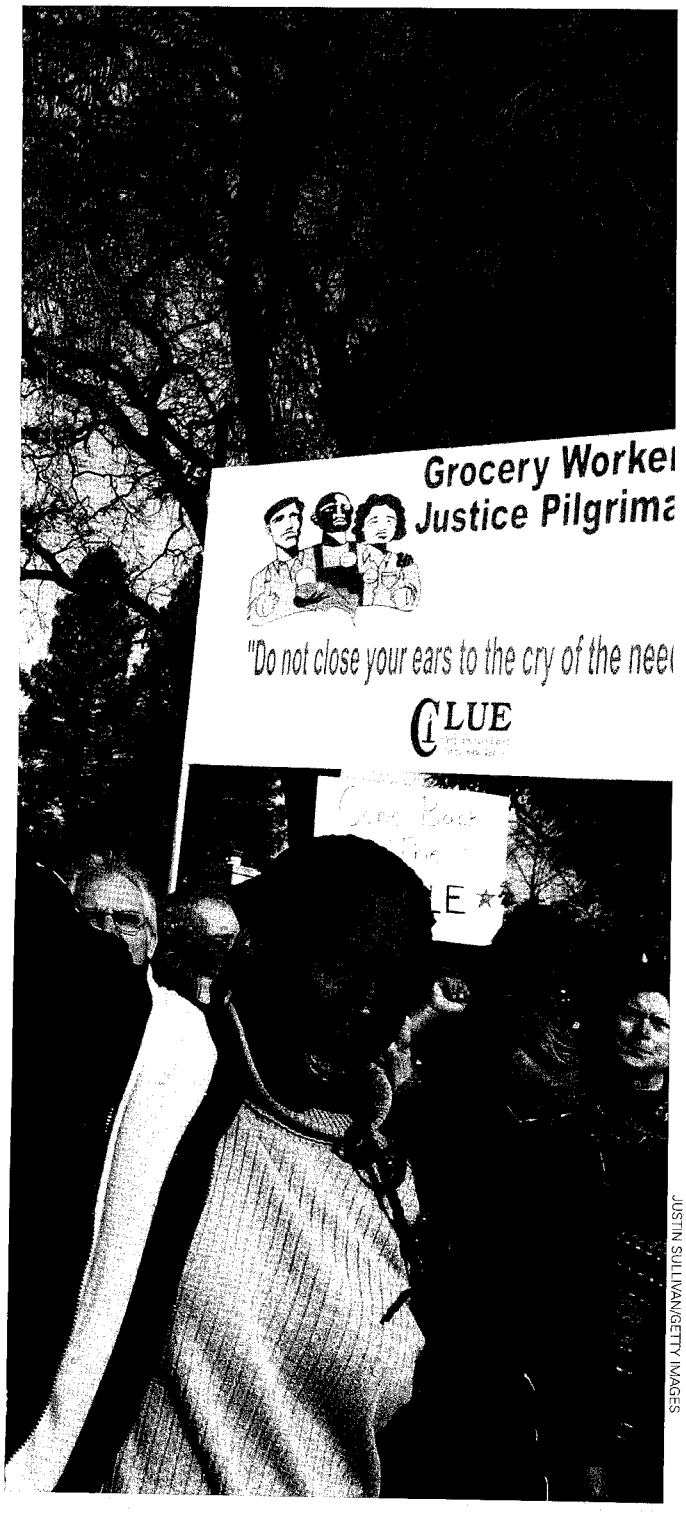
A new generation of activist clergy promotes labor's economic agenda.



JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Religious leaders join striking grocery workers in an Alamo, California, protest.

Steven Malanga

Everyone knows that the Christian Right is a potent force in American politics. But since the mid-nineties, an increasingly influential religious movement has arisen on the left, mostly escaping the national press's notice. The movement expends its political energies not on the cultural concerns that primarily motivate conservative evangelicals, but instead on an array of labor and economic issues. Working mostly at the state and local level, and often in lockstep with unions, the ministers, priests, rabbis, and laity of this new Religious Left have lent their moral authority to a variety of left-wing causes, exerting a major, sometimes decisive influence in campaigns to enforce a "living wage," to help unions organize, and to block the expansion of

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nonunionized businesses like Wal-Mart, among other struggles. Indeed, the movement's effectiveness has made it one of organized labor's most reliable allies.

The new Religious Left is in one sense not new at all. It draws its inspiration from the Christian social-justice movement that formed in the mid-nineteenth century as a response to the emerging industrial economy, which many religious leaders viewed—with some justification—as brutal and unfair to workers. In America, the movement gained traction thanks largely to the efforts of Baptist minister Walter Rauschenbusch, who served New York City's poor. Unlike nineteenth-century reformers who sought to help the poor by teaching them the bourgeois virtues of hard work, thrift, and diligence, Rauschenbusch believed that the best way to uplift the downtrodden was to redistribute society's wealth and forge an egalitarian society. In Christ's name, capitalism had to fall. "The Kingdom of God is a collective conception," Rauschenbusch wrote in *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, politicizing the Gospel's message. "It is not a matter of getting individuals to heaven, but of transforming the life on earth into the harmony of heaven."

Rauschenbusch's "social gospel," as it came to be called, fell out of favor after World War I, when the violence of the Russian Revolution and the radicalization of European workers alarmed many American Christians. But in milder forms, the notion persisted that clergy should minister to the needy not by guiding souls to heavenly paradise but by seeking structural changes in society. In 1919, the Catholic philosopher Monsignor John Ryan gained a wide following by calling for pro-union legislation, steep taxes on wealth, and more stringent business regulation. When FDR adopted several of Father Ryan's ideas in the 1930s, the priest was given the sobriquet "the Right Reverend New Dealer." His popularity reflected the tightening alliance between America's mainstream churches and organized labor.

That alliance disintegrated during the 1960s. Left-wing clerics like the notorious rebel priests the Berrigan brothers began to agitate for a wider range of radical causes—above all, a swift end to the Vietnam War. The more culturally conservative blue-collar workers who formed the union movement's core wanted no part of this. The rift between the Religious Left and labor leaders would last for several decades.

The mending of that rift—and the arrival on the political scene of a new, union-friendly, Religious Left during the mid-nineties—owes much to the tireless efforts of savvy labor bosses, especially AFL-CIO president John Sweeney. The son of Irish immigrants, Sweeney grew up in a prototypical Catholic pro-union household; when he took over the AFL-CIO in 1996, he resolved to restore the bonds between church and labor. In a 1996 speech to a Catholic symposium, Sweeney evoked an era when labor unions were mighty and churches stood squarely behind them: "In our modest home in the Bronx, there were three things central to our lives: our family, the Church, and the union," he recalled. With union membership shrinking—from 24 percent of the workforce 30 years ago to 14.5 percent in 1996 (and just 12 percent today)—"unions need aggressive participation by the Church in our organizing campaigns," he implored church leaders.

The Sweeney-led AFL-CIO reenergized the old alliance. Soon after he took office, the AFL-CIO launched "Labor in the Pulpits," a program that encouraged churches and synagogues to invite union leaders to preach the virtues of organized labor and tout its political agenda. Labor in the Pulpits has steadily expanded: nearly 1,000 congregations in 100 cities nationwide now take part annually. Sweeney himself has preached from the pulpit of Washington, D.C.'s National Cathedral, urging congregants to join antiglobalization protests in the capital. In Los Angeles, caravans of union activists have visited black churches on Labor Day Sunday, dispensing contributions from union locals. San Jose union leaders, seeing amnesty for illegal aliens as a way to garner new recruits, have asked churchgoers to support it. And in Des Moines, a vice president of the United Steelworkers told a Methodist

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congregation: "In America today, the pursuit of profits takes precedence over the pursuit of justice—and working families are suffering the consequences."

Under the auspices of Labor in the Pulpits, clerics in America's mainstream churches—Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians—have composed guidelines for union-friendly sermons and litanies, as well as inserts for church bulletins that promote union legislation. One insert, distributed in 2006, asked congregants to pray for a federal minimum-wage hike and also—if the prayers didn't work, presumably—to contact their congressional representatives. Another recent one encouraged churchgoers to arrange home viewings of an anti-Wal-Mart documentary, to stop shopping at the retail giant, and to patronize Costco, a unionized competitor. A 2005 insert urged congregants to lobby Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act—controversial legislation that would let unions organize firms merely by getting workers to sign authorizing cards, rather than by conducting secret ballots, as is currently required.

"The arrival of a new, union-friendly, Religious Left owes much to the tireless efforts of savvy labor bosses."

Unions are also cultivating the next generation of church leaders. "Seminary Summer," an initiative created with the Chicago-based, union-supported Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ), arranges for seminarians to spend the summer months working with union locals. "Within three years most of these students will be in leadership positions in congregations," predicted IWJ head Kim Bobo shortly after the program began in 2000. Since then, some 200 seminarians have helped unionize Mississippi poultry workers, aided the Service Employees International Union in organizing Georgia public-sector employees, and bolstered campaigns for living-wage legislation in California municipalities.

Seminary Summer seems to be sparking considerable enthusiasm among participants. "Before Seminary Summer, I had been leery, even suspicious, of labor unions," remarked Lori Peterson of Loyola University, a 2006 enrollee. But afterward, she said, "I began to believe in the labor movement again. The training gave me a new perspective on unions and how important they are to creating equality and justice." Chicago Divinity School student Beau Underwood, who took part in 2007, is equally fervent. "One staple of a union organizer's toolbox is the bullhorn and I love it," he noted on his blog. "One of the very first days I led chants during an early-morning hotel picket line. Just today, I 'bullhorned' at customers of a hotel being boycotted by the union."

"Younger seminarians may be particularly receptive to such experiences," suggests Father Robert Sirico of the Acton Institute, which tries to educate religious leaders on the compatibility of free-market principles with Christian beliefs. "Seminarians are preaching all the time," he adds, "and if they don't have an economic background, it's easy for them to fall into the fallacy of the Left that our economy is a zero-sum game that demands conflict between business owners and workers."

Working with IWJ, the labor movement has spawned some 60 new Religious Left groups, ranging from the Massachusetts Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice to the Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues to the Los Angeles–based Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (Clue). These organizations have given unions an effective ally, especially in town councils, city halls, and state capitols, which have proven more union-friendly than Washington, D.C., in recent years.

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Nowhere have these efforts borne more fruit than in Los Angeles, where Clue has recruited some 600 religious leaders to back worker causes. Clue clergy helped crush several 2005 statewide ballot initiatives that unions opposed, including one that gave union workers the option of not paying dues that would fund union political activities. In 2006, Clue pressure, including a fast for striking workers, helped prompt building owners in greater L.A. to allow security guards to unionize. Two years earlier, Clue had united about 50 local congregations to support 4,000 workers demanding more money and better benefits from 17 area hotels. Clergy asked the faithful to boycott the hotels until their owners caved—as, in the end, they did.

Interfaith coalitions have scored similar victories elsewhere. In Memphis, for instance, clergy fought relentlessly—via newspaper op-eds, public fasts, and preaching—for the passage of living-wage bills that since 2004 have forced local businesses to hike wages well above the federal minimum. "The living-wage effort here was pushed mainly by local clergy," says Ken Hall, former vice president for the Memphis Regional Chamber of Commerce, which battled the measures.

Noting the success of Memphis's living-wage battle and of similar campaigns in which religious leaders have played key roles, unions and their allies have made recruiting Religious Left support part of the activist playbook—an inspired strategy, since polls show that even secular Americans consider clergy our most admired profession. The Wayne State University Labor Studies Center's "activist handbook" advises living-wage campaigns always to put religious leaders out front. "As soon as you have clergy arguing for something called a 'living wage,' you've lost the battle if you're representing businesses," Hall observes. "If I was debating against union members advocating for a 'surplus wage law,' which is what living-wage laws actually are, we would have won." Pro-labor Berkeley city councilman Kriss Worthington echoes the point from the other side of the fence. "When a politician or union proposes something, people start out with a questioning attitude," he said after clerics helped sway the council to endorse a labor initiative. "When you have a faith community, it adds a moral and ethical component"—all the more effective in that the Religious Left essentially has the spiritual terrain to itself on economic matters, which Christian conservative groups have mostly ignored. The labor-religious coalitions have worked spectacularly well: some 125 municipalities have passed living-wage laws.

Some of America's most venerable Protestant denominations have thrown their institutional weight behind the new alliance with labor. More than 100 religious organizations support IWJ financially, including the National Council of Churches of the USA (NCC), an umbrella organization of nearly 40 mainstream Christian denominations. Key NCC members such as the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Episcopal Church are particularly active. Though it was founded in 1950 to promote ecumenical cooperation, the NCC has become a clearinghouse for religious participation in left-wing causes. Heavily funded by liberal groups like the Tides Foundation and the Ford Foundation, during the 2004 national elections the NCC organized the Let Justice Roll campaign, which focused on voter registration drives in Democratic areas, and it renewed the campaign in 2006, this time with an emphasis on helping statewide groups pass referenda raising the minimum wage.

The new alliance between labor and religion also enjoys the powerful backing of the Catholic Church, whose American hierarchy, though often conservative on social issues, is firmly left-wing in its economic views. Several dozen major Catholic groups—including the Catholic Conference of Bishops, Catholic Charities, and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles—contribute financially to interfaith workers' groups and assist their lobbying efforts. At a national conference, Bishop Gabino Zavala of L.A. went so far as to compare labor leaders with Old Testament prophets, praising them for "bringing the same conviction, ideals, passion, commitment to justice, energy for human rights, and sense of mission to their bold words and actions, to their union organizing and coalition building."

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Having established itself in many places as the moral authority on economic issues, the resurgent Religious Left has brought back the fiery redistributionist language of the social gospel. Despite decades of economic progress that have reduced unemployment levels to record lows and made America a magnet for opportunity-seeking immigrants, clerical anticapitalism increasingly echoes Rauschenbusch's old notion that "it is hard to get riches with justice." Leading clergy have depicted the free market as a vast, exploitative force, controlled by a small group of godless power brokers for their own gain. Speaking to a national conference of religious and labor leaders, IWJ's copresident, the Reverend Nelson Johnson, called for America to save itself from "its own arrogance, its selfishness and greed" and admonished an elite "wallowing in the obscenity of massive unearned wealth." In a scriptural reflection distributed for Labor in the Pulpits this year, the Reverend Darren Wood, a Methodist and the author of *Blue Collar Jesus*, criticized "the gluttony of the wealthy and the abusive powers of corporations" and declared that Christ envisioned "an alternate economy of equality." To achieve that egalitarian vision, the IWJ's Bobo recently pronounced, America needs a "redistribution" to "shift wealth from a few to working families."

"Leading clergy have depicted the free market as a vast, exploitative force controlled by godless power brokers."

The Religious Left reserves some of its most hyperbolic rhetoric for Wal-Mart, the labor movement's bête noire. Clergy describe the giant retailer in terms that its thousands of suppliers, millions of employees, and tens of millions of customers would hardly recognize. The Reverend Jarvis Johnson, an IWJ board member, has urged congregants to invite the "hurting, blind and crippled" to a metaphorical banquet. Who are these poor, abused souls? "They are Wal-Mart associates who have to wait six months to a year to qualify for a health care plan," Johnson explained. The Reverend Alexia Salvatierra, a Lutheran minister and head of Clue, compares Wal-Mart with "the noblemen of Luther's time," whom the German monk denounced for robbing the poor.

Religious Left leaders have blindly accepted all that the unions claim about corporate America's sins. In backing the Employee Free Choice Act, for instance, clerics argue that laws and rulings by anti-union government bureaucrats have crippled workers' ability to organize—the big reason, they claim, that union membership has plummeted. "Our government seems determined to undermine the people's right to organize in the United States," charged the Reverend Nelson Johnson earlier this year, in reaction to a National Labor Relations Board ruling that broadened the definition of "supervisor," narrowing the number of people eligible to join unions as hourly employees. But the real reason for labor's decline is simply that many workers, enjoying their mobility in the prosperous, dynamic twenty-first-century American economy, now view unions as irrelevant. A 2005 Zogby poll found that only 35 percent of nonorganized workers would join a union if given the opportunity. And contrary to the clerics who rail against abusive corporate power, 70 percent of workers in the same survey said that their companies cared about them, and 72 percent claimed to be happy in their jobs.

The Religious Left also refuses to acknowledge the considerable academic research showing that mandated wage hikes often eliminate the jobs of low-skilled workers—the very people whom it seeks to help. In editorials, the Reverend Rebekah Jordan, a Methodist minister who heads Memphis's local interfaith group, used union-sponsored research to argue that living-wage laws benefit workers and do little harm to employment rates. But David Neumark, a researcher at the University of California at

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Berkeley's Institute of Business and Economics Research and one of the world's foremost authorities on wage laws, has found that while living-wage laws do boost the income of some low-wage workers, they also have "strong negative employment effects"—that is, they vaporize jobs. In one study, Neumark noted that a 50 percent boost in the living wage produced a decline in employment for the lowest-skilled workers of between 6 and 8 percent.

Further, the leftist clerics ignore mounting evidence that much poverty in prosperous, opportunity-rich America results not from a failed economic system but from dysfunctional—dare one call it "sinful"?—behavior. Around two-thirds of poor families with children today are single-parent households, largely dependent on government subsidies. Single women with little education head most of these households. The kind of work for which these mothers are qualified—entry-level, low-wage—makes it hard to support large families; and the time that they must devote to raising their kids makes it hard, in turn, to climb the economic ladder. Poverty, in other words, is increasingly about the irresponsible decision—again, we might once have called it sinful—to have children out of wedlock. In a recent study on American poverty highlighted by the National Bureau of Economic Research, economists from the University of California at Davis found that "changes in family structure—notably a doubling of the percent of families headed by a single woman—can account for a 3.7 percentage point increase in poverty rates, more than the entire rise in the poverty rate from 10.7 percent to 12.8 percent since 1980."

By contrast, observes Catholic neoconservative writer Michael Novak, research demonstrates that the way out of poverty for most Americans is to make a few simple life choices. "Some 97 percent of those who complete high school, stay married (even if not on the first try), and work full-time year-round (even at the minimum wage) are not poor," Novak points out. "Nearly all poverty in the United States is associated with the absence of one or more of these three basic accomplishments"—not with insufficient social spending or a lack of economic opportunity.

Gary Palmer, president of the Alabama Policy Institute, a conservative think tank, charges that leftist clerics have become part of the poverty problem. "The Religious Left has abdicated responsibility as a moral authority," says Palmer, who in 2003 faced off against religious leaders after they backed Alabama governor Bob Riley's push to raise taxes. Palmer argues that religious groups can play a significant role in fighting poverty—but only by striving to strengthen the family and personal responsibility. "The attitude of the Religious Left seems to be, 'Let government do it,' and they would drive us toward a kind of Christian socialism," he says.

Not only are the Religious Left's fuzzy, shopworn ideas out of step with the latest poverty research; they're also at odds with the opinions of many congregants. Consider the leftist clergy's latest initiative, "New Sanctuary." Opposing government efforts to deport illegal immigrants, the IWJ has helped organize a national network of congregations that grant illegal aliens sanctuary in their churches. Responding to critics who complain that religious leaders shouldn't assist lawbreakers, Bobo counters: "There is a strong belief among many people of faith that if laws are unjust, there may be times and situations in which laws should be broken."

But many American Christians don't share that belief, at least when it comes to immigration. According to a Pew Center poll, more white, mainline Protestants and non-Hispanic Catholics condemn helping illegal immigrants evade the law than condone such behavior. "Despite the strong pro-immigrant statements issued recently by a number of prominent religious leaders," Pew noted, "polls show that a large segment of the public—including many Catholics, mainline Protestants and evangelicals—harbor serious concerns about immigration and immigrants."

The dissonance between Religious Left leaders and their congregants on immigration isn't anomalous. While the NCC and its member churches pursue a variety of left-wing causes—even partnering with the activist organization MoveOn.org and featuring speakers like Michael Moore at events—a Pew poll has found that 54 percent of

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The Religious Left has provided sanctuary for illegal aliens and backs amnesty for undocumented workers.

white, mainline Protestants and 50 percent of Catholics voted Republican in the 2004 presidential elections. Those who attended church regularly voted Republican even more heavily—at nearly the same rate as evangelical Christians, in fact.

Those numbers are a reminder that for four decades, as the leadership of America's mainline Christian churches has moved steadily leftward, those churches' memberships have declined as a percentage of the U.S. population, even as the number of Christian evangelicals exploded. Cultural issues drove most of the flight from old-line churches, which became as liberal socially as anticapitalist economically; believers moved to more conservative congregations, whose positions on issues such as abortion and the traditional family lined up more comfortably with their own. So the left-wing clerics may be buying greater political influence with their new alliance through organized labor, but in so doing they may wind up further alienating their shrinking flock.

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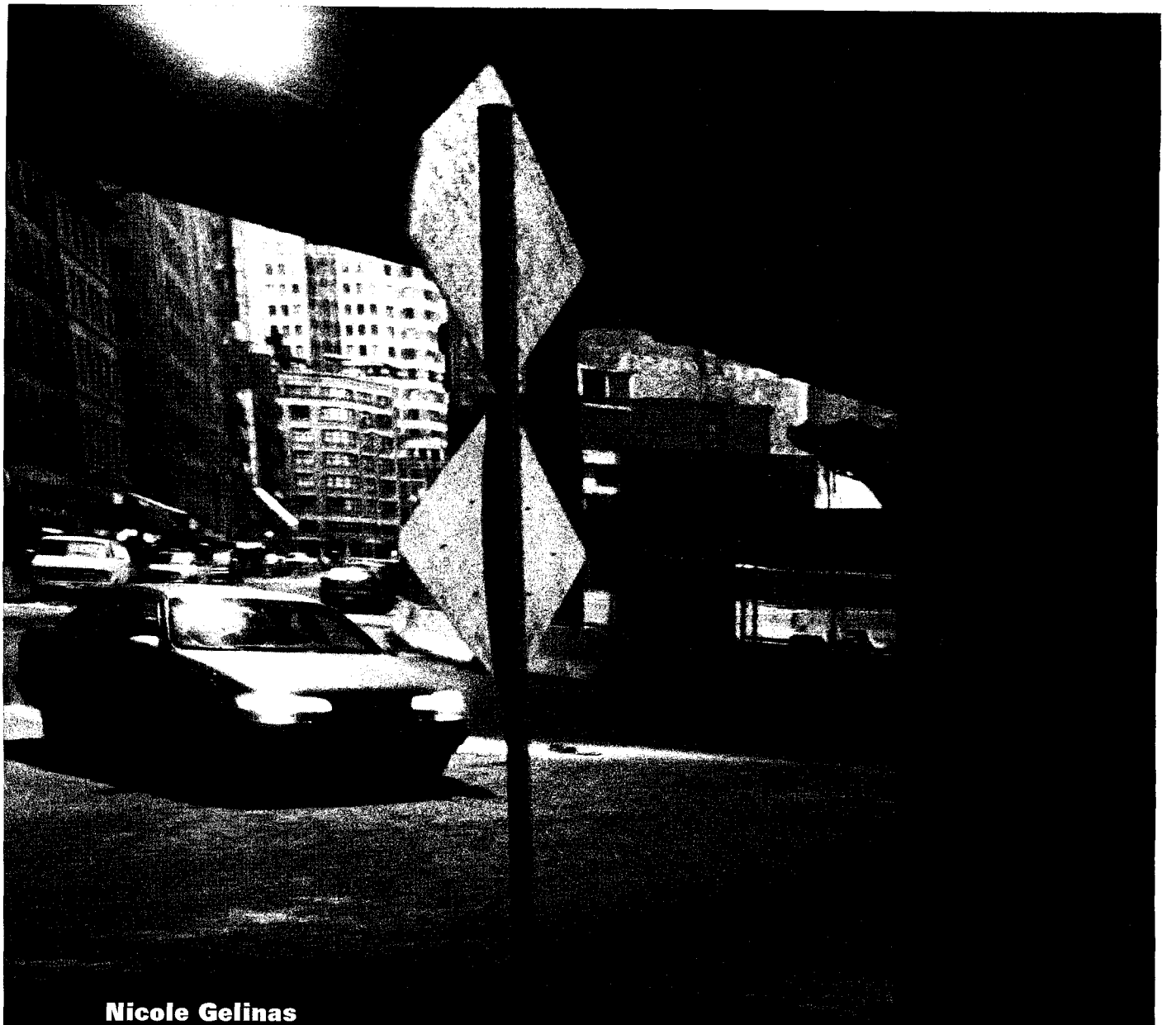

Nicole Gelinas

States, cities, and towns across America must spend hundreds of billions of dollars annually to preserve the nation's infrastructure—the backbone of its private-sector economy—and yet more to build the next generation of roads, bridges, tunnels, and dams. Spending so much money wisely is daunting. The good news: no matter how complex and expensive any future project is, it's unlikely to be more so than the Big Dig, Massachusetts's three-decade-long quest to bury and expand the Central Artery, Boston's major interstate highway, and carve out a new underwater tunnel to Logan Airport.

Conceived in the 1970s and finished, more or less, in 2005, the Big Dig is modern America's most ambitious urban-infrastructure project, spanning six presidents and seven governors, costing $14.8 billion, and featuring many never-before-done engineering and construction marvels. Long before construction peaked around the turn of the millennium, eating up $100 million a month for three years, the Big Dig was a local legend, spawning dozens of jokes. (Wouldn't it be cheaper to raise Boston than to bury the highway?

The poorly constructed Central Artery cast a vital area of Boston in shadow.

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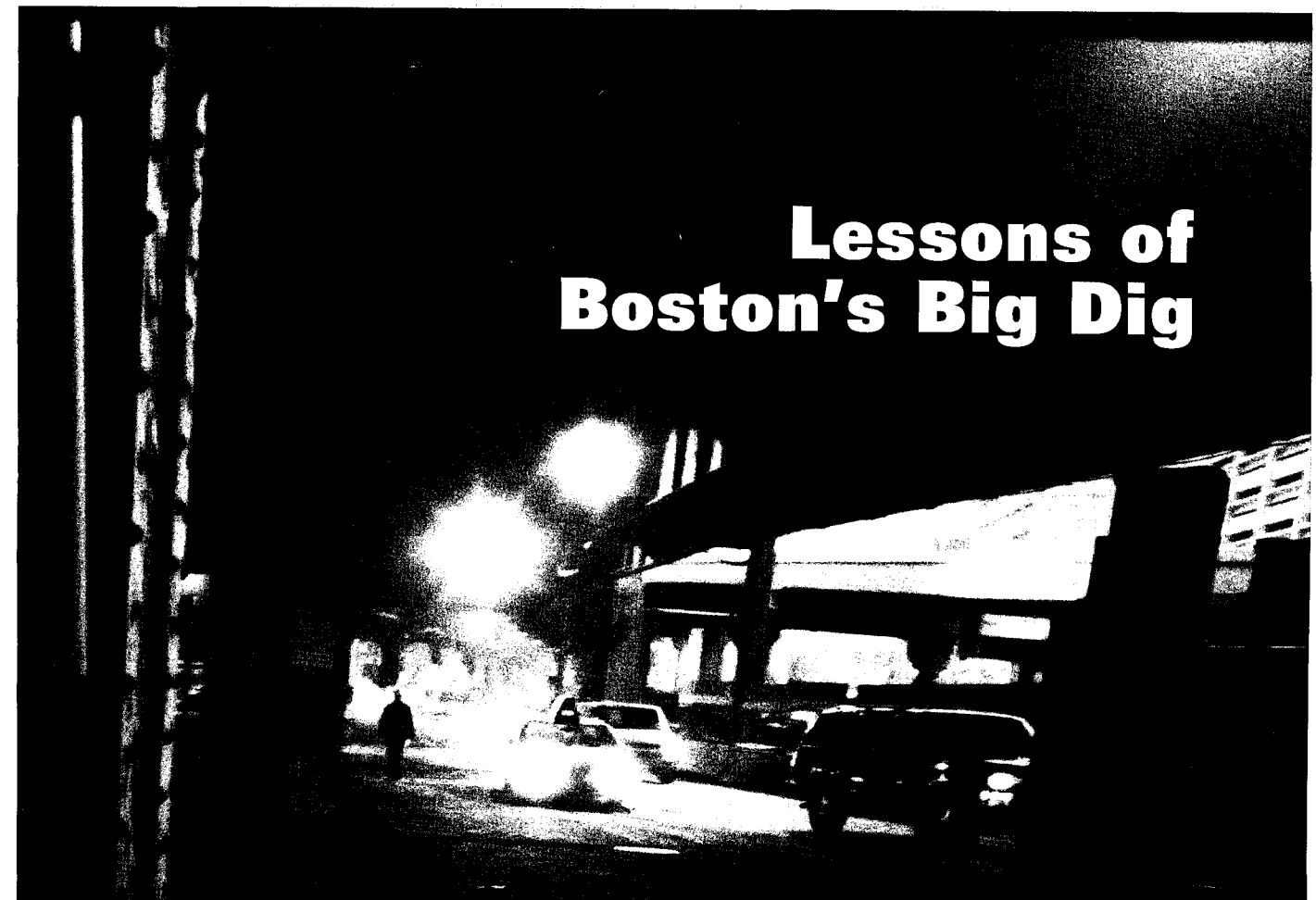
Lessons of Boston's Big Dig



America's most ambitious infrastructure project inspired engineering marvels—and colossal mismanagement.

Photographs by Michael Hintlian

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Congressman Barney Frank asked.) Later, when fewer people viewed the Dig whimsically, it was the setting of a 2002 murder-mystery novel. And last year, after falling concrete panels in a Big Dig tunnel that had been open for three years killed a 38-year-old car passenger, the project became a reminder that infrastructure failure can exact a cruel price.

Every major decision that could conceivably be made on an infrastructure project was made on the Big Dig, from how to pay for it to how to forge the public and political support for it to how to manage its construction and maintenance. Its stewards have encountered every imaginable public-infrastructure pitfall, and fallen into many. The Big Dig's story is an invaluable lesson: How can America invest in infrastructure—and do it smart?

The reasons for the Big Dig date back nearly 80 years. In 1930, a city planning board noted that Boston's "street system should be adapted to the requirements of the motor age" and proposed an elevated expressway. The Central Artery's first planners acknowledged that "the erection of . . . elevated structures . . . in downtown Boston" would hurt some residents' quality of life. But a "vehicular subway"—the first mention of the idea that, half a century later, would become the Big Dig—"would interfere with sewers and with . . . rapid transit subways." The state and city had the luxury of deciding to build an elevated highway because bottom-up, Jane Jacobs–inspired urban coalitions didn't exist yet to thwart the era's top-down, Robert Moses–style urban planners.

The Great Depression and the Second World War temporarily interfered with the idea. By the late 1940s, Boston still didn't have its highway, despite two decades of planning—and despite the increasing need for fast access to the city, which was hemorrhaging jobs to the suburbs. But in 1949, six years before Congress and President Eisenhower funded the Interstate Highway System, Massachusetts started building the hideous green steel Central Artery that would scar Boston, physically and psychologically, for the rest of the century. "Boston was a pioneer, but this was bad pioneering," says Rick Dimino, former city transportation commissioner and today president of the business group A Better City.

It's easy to follow officials' reasoning for building the Artery along Boston's waterfront. That's where Boston's business district, once centered on shipping, was located, after all. But the Artery vivisected Boston. It barred pedestrians from the water. It overwhelmed low-rise streets, a historic outdoor fruit and vegetable market, and even the historic Faneuil Hall with traffic, noise, and shadow. It erased swaths of the working-class Italian North End, displacing 573 businesses—mostly small shops and trading firms—and hundreds of families. Owners of some buildings that escaped the bulldozers bricked over windows that faced the Artery. Boston understood the Artery's impact so quickly that in 1954 it changed tack and buried a last stretch in a tunnel.

Though it did enable suburban workers to get to new office jobs, the Artery quickly became obsolete. Its intended daily capacity was 70,000 cars, but it soon groaned under 170,000. Poorly designed and constructed, it had structural problems and an accident rate four times the national average, because drivers veering toward the Artery's abundance of downtown exits collided with drivers continuing to the increasingly busy Logan Airport. The building of the Artery turned Bostonians so vehemently against highways that the state halted their construction in the early seventies, killing a planned inner belt that, after displacing another 4,000 families, would have carried traffic from the downtown Artery to other parts of the city. But because the belt and the Artery had been conceived as an integrated system, Artery traffic had nowhere to go. Little more than a decade after the Artery opened, Massachusetts and Boston started scheming to junk it.

When Governor Michael Dukakis's administration started thinking about fixing this mess in the seventies and early eighties, it had learned the lessons of the Artery's construction well. But how to fix the Artery, and heal the downtown neighborhoods that it sliced through, without uprooting more residents and slapping a "closed for construction" sign on Boston? How

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to ease traffic by building an airport tunnel that, unlike the two existing tunnels, would bypass downtown, when the politically powerful neighborhood near the airport opposed new traffic and the seizing of homes?

If Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs had a child, it might have been Fred Salvucci, Dukakis's transportation secretary, who concocted the Big Dig project. Armed with two MIT engineering degrees, Salvucci had fought the inner belt from city hall before joining Dukakis; he even had firsthand experience of how highway construction affects cities, having seen the state seize and raze his elderly grandmother's house to make way for a road. Salvucci remembers persuading Dukakis to support the Big Dig by making two crucial pledges: "It would enhance the urban environment rather than degrade it, and there would be no taking of housing." The state then won the public over by mollifying anyone, anywhere, who had anything at all to do with the project. "We learned from Westway," says Salvucci, referring to New York's plan to depress its West Side Highway, which failed because the city didn't garner various interest groups' support before seeking congressional approval.

"The Big Dig's stewards have encountered every imaginable public-infrastructure pitfall, and fallen into many."

Massachusetts's task was partly northeastern politics as usual. Unions knew that they'd benefit from a "project labor agreement," through which their workers would agree not to strike if contractors, even nonunion ones, would hire through union halls. Police officers would get tens of millions of dollars annually in overtime, since local law mandates that a policeman watch over any work site. Minority-group reps were pleased with a pledge to hire blacks and women for construction jobs.

But the state had a new task, one that would become a feature of big infrastructure projects nationwide: "mitigation." Broadly speaking, mitigation was the state's promise to alleviate the Big Dig's impact on Boston, from interrupting business to harming the environment. Mitigation eventually accounted for about one-third of the Big Dig's cost—from the thousands of dollars needed to outfit North End apartments with air conditioning, soundproof windows, and firm mattresses as residents settled in for a decade of construction to the more than $1 billion needed to rework a planned bridge that business leaders, residents, and the nearby city of Cambridge considered ugly.

Mitigation made downtown businesses happy, promising not to shut down any of the Central Artery's six lanes during construction, and promising further that companies such as Fidelity Investments wouldn't lack electricity or telephones for even a few hours as contractors dug up miles of utilities to make room for underground highways. Mitigation made Gillette, Boston's biggest manufacturer, happy, working with the company to marry its complicated underwater infrastructure to the Big Dig's. Mitigation made the post office happy, building temporary roads to a distribution station. Mitigation made airport neighbors happy, vowing that cars from the airport tunnel wouldn't exit onto residential land. Mitigation also made environmentalists happy with its promise to preserve as open space three-quarters of the land that the Artery's demolition would create (the highway tunnels that would run underneath couldn't support heavy construction, anyway). It made more ambitious environmentalists happy, promising to improve mass transit and to use some of the excavated dirt—which, because it had saltwater in it, couldn't be dumped inland—to transform a Boston Harbor island from a noxious landfill into a beachfront park. It made archaeologists happy, paying to catalog artifacts dating back to colonial days. It didn't make rats happy: after near-hysteria that construction would unleash vermin whose underground lairs also dated to colonial days, the project launched an aggressive rodent-control program.

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The mitigation, some of which was sensible, tempered even reasonable criticism of the Big Dig. Few locals voiced skepticism during planning. Once you got your own interest protected, you kept quiet, to make sure that the project, free of local opposition, would win federal funding. Thanks largely to mitigation efforts, more than 80 percent of Boston residents and nearly two-thirds of state residents supported the Big Dig in its early years.

Mitigation notwithstanding, the Big Dig still would probably be a near-forgotten dream like Westway if not for Massachusetts's Washington dominance in the late seventies and eighties. Democrats ran Capitol Hill, and Massachusetts's wholly Democratic congressional delegation had a lot of seniority. Everyone in Massachusetts thus assumed that they would fund the project with "ten-cent dollars," of which the feds would pay the other 90.

Even so, Massachusetts got its initial federal funding only because of Salvucci's and Dukakis's brilliant and successful argument: since it had built its Artery before the Interstate Highway System paid for such projects, the state should be able to use the federal money that it *hadn't* spent back then to *re*build the Artery. This fluke explains why Massachusetts, at a time when other northeastern states were ignoring infrastructure in favor of expanding social programs like Medicaid, focused on nuts and bolts: it knew that if it did so, it could tap into "free" federal money. Taking this argument to Washington, legendary Massachusetts Democrat Tip O'Neill, the House's majority leader and soon to be its Speaker, in 1976 inserted "placeholder" funds for the Big Dig into a congressional blueprint of costs to complete the Interstate Highway System.

A decade later, though, President Reagan didn't care to give Massachusetts Democrats billions for what skeptics considered a "highway beautification project." When Reagan vetoed a 1987 highway bill that contained the Big Dig's first significant federal funding, the real politics started. Tip, and Ted Kennedy in the Senate, garnered enough supporters, including 13 Republicans, for an override. In a preview of how Washington would work over the next two decades, they approved goodies that other states wanted, too. Wavering out-of-state politicians came on board.

After Tip's override, local Big Dig planners never worried about pesky things like whether cost estimates and project scope were reasonable. Massachusetts had proved that it was more powerful than the president; surely there would always be more money where its initial funding came from. But over the ensuing decades, the Big Dig's price tag waxed and Massachusetts's congressional power waned. Washington imposed a firm dollar cap on its Big Dig spending at the turn of the millennium, leaving Massachusetts to pay the rest. State taxpayers would eventually foot nearly half the project's cost.

The Bay State's experience is a lesson for state officials: the clout you have today may be gone tomorrow. If you think that an ambitious project's benefits exceed its costs, convince your taxpayers up front—rather than getting Washington, which may change its mind down the road, to get *its* taxpayers to pay.

In retrospect, it's amazing how much went right after construction started in 1991. Over 14 years, Massachusetts, its consultants, and its contractors carved canyons under Boston while the city hummed above. They designed and built seven and a half miles of highway—161 miles of separate lanes—more than half of them in tunnels. They built six interchanges and 200 bridges.

One of the innovations that made this work possible was the slurry wall, also used at New York's World Trade Center, which allowed the state, as Salvucci puts it, to build huge underground tunnels "arthroscopically," without pockmarking Boston with huge uncovered holes. The slurry wall, in effect, let Boston dig itself up without shutting itself down. The Big Dig's general reliance on new technology was a major factor in one of the project officials' biggest decisions: choosing a consortium made up of Bechtel and Parsons Brinckerhoff as the "management consultant." Parsons was an expert in innovative urban tunneling dating to the early twentieth

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Redesigning the Zakim Bridge was a huge part of the Big Dig's nearly $15 billion tab.

century, when it built New York City's subways. Bechtel had constructed the Hoover Dam as well as most of modern Saudi Arabia, and had fabled political connections to accompany its engineering and logistics mystique. Caspar Weinberger and George Shultz, both in Reagan's cabinet, were Bechtel men—though that connection hadn't helped Salvucci at veto time.

One of the creative, audacious, and potentially disastrous things that Bechtel and Parsons, as well as the state's contractors, did right on the Big Dig was jacking up the Central Artery—replacing the half-million-ton highway's 69 support columns with temporary "underpinnings" so that contractors could remove the columns and make way for the tunnels. "Pinning the Artery" wasn't the Big Dig's only never-before-done feat. The striking Zakim Bridge—the one redesigned after community outrage—is the world's widest cable-stayed asymmetrical bridge, expanding from eight lanes to ten to account for complicated traffic flow.

Elsewhere, underneath active railroad tracks, engineers froze ground too soft to withstand construction and pushed prebuilt tunnel sections through. They erected a huge temporary dam to dry out a basin in which to construct tunnel segments—and then flooded the basin, floating the segments and resinking them in their new underwater homes. They built underground bridges to hold up subways, threading highway tunnels above *and* below mass transit. And though insurance tables had predicted 40 serious accidents during the project, the Big Dig suffered only a quarter of that total, and three construction deaths—showing how much things had changed since, say, the 1870s, when raising the Brooklyn Bridge took 27 lives.

Leave it to Massachusetts, though, to turn the Big Dig's reputation from resounding success to humiliating failure—first in terms of the project's cost. From day one—even after accounting for politicians' erring on the low side to gain public approval—the Big Dig was fated to cost more than its 1982 price tag of $2.6 billion.

That number didn't include much of the project's mitigation, including big changes like the billion-plus extra to remake the Zakim Bridge.

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Nor did it include the real costs of staying on schedule. The Big Dig often let its contractors start work on pieces of the project before designs for other key parts were complete. This approach—part of the project's philosophy of getting things done now and asking questions later—meant expensive changes to contracts. By the early 1990s, as the state added new work, and as its consultants and contractors looked underground to see what was actually there, the Big Dig's price tag had ballooned to nearly $8 billion.

True, critics aren't being entirely fair when they compare the project's final cost, $14.8 billion, with the initial estimate; $2.6 billion in 1982 is $5.6 billion today, thanks to inflation. And inflation has similarly distorted the cost of the many expensive changes made to the project—because the more realistic cost estimates that accounted for those changes were also calculated in then-current dollars, rather than in the dollars that the state eventually had to pay. Still, there's a lesson here for managers of other infrastructure projects: be careful with that first number, because it can become a permanent benchmark against which to measure success or failure.

Perhaps it's understandable that inflation and massive increases in scope would swell the project's price tag. But the Big Dig's planners truly failed the public through a deliberate decision: for years, they used dubious accounting methods that hid true costs.

In 1994, two years into construction, Bechtel and Parsons officials compiled convincing evidence that the Big Dig would cost nearly $14 billion in completion-year dollars—far more than public officials were disclosing—and took their findings to the state, says former state inspector general Bob Cerasoli, who supervised a 2001 report on the Big Dig's finances. But the state didn't tell the public, so alarming Bechtel that its president flew to Boston to see then-governor William Weld. Afterward, according to Cerasoli's report, "state managers directed state and [Bechtel and Parsons] staff to . . . maintain the fiction of an . . . $8 billion project. . . . They did so by applying a largely semantic series of exclusions, deductions, and accounting assumptions that covered up the $6 billion difference," often with the knowledge of federal highway officials.

Some state officials thought that if they delayed disclosing money woes, the public would be so thrilled with early improvements like the Ted Williams Tunnel, which opened in 1995, that they wouldn't pay attention to boring finances. But as an internal "pros and cons" document noted, if the state didn't inform bondholders, it risked fraud charges—and, in fact, federal securities regulators later reprimanded Weld's Big Dig boss, James Kerasiotes, for "misleading" investors. Even more pressing, the state needed actual money to continue its project, so it had to come clean despite worries that "we could become the central controversy of the next year in Massachusetts." It was after the state finally fessed up that the feds imposed their permanent funding cap on the project.

Massachusetts's desire to insulate the public from the Big Dig's costs also led to a fateful decision by Governor Weld. Weld needed a ready source of money for the project, without hiking taxes or cutting spending elsewhere. So he transferred the Big Dig's assets to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, an unaccountable public entity akin to New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority, in return for some of the authority's future toll revenue, which would back Big Dig bonds. This costly trade added a new layer of bureaucracy to the project, which needed, more than anything, one elected person to be ultimately accountable. After last year's fatal ceiling collapse, Mitt Romney, governor for nearly four years, could point to the fact that his predecessor's appointee still ran the Big Dig.

But the Big Dig's biggest pitfall was that Massachusetts never understood a basic fact: that it couldn't pay someone else to assume its own responsibility for an immensely complex, risky project. As the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) would later say in its report on the 2006 ceiling collapse, Bechtel and Parsons, the state's long-term consultants, were "performing the role that would normally be carried out by a government agency, specifically, the state highway department."

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Since costs turned the Big Dig into a scandal, the public has often seen Bechtel and Parsons as its villains. The perception in Massachusetts—never dispelled by state officials—is that the duo's thousand-plus white-collar workers, dwarfing their few dozen public-sector counterparts, *ran* the Big Dig, expertly controlling and manipulating designers, contractors, and information, without letting anyone else have much say, from colleagues at lowly engineering firms to meddling public officials. But even assuming the worst—and the reality is more complicated—people usually can't manipulate you unless you let them. As early as 1991, the state's inspector general warned of the "increasingly apparent vulnerabilities . . . of [Massachusetts's] long-term dependence on a consultant" whose contract had an "open-ended structure" and "inadequate monitoring." The main deficiency, as later IG reports detailed, was that Bechtel and Parsons—as "preliminary designer," "design coordinator," "construction coordinator," and "contract administrator"—were often in charge of checking their own work. If, say, the team noticed in managing construction that a contract was over budget because of problems rooted in preliminary design, it didn't have much incentive to speak up.

The state should also have known that when consultancy work will last years and when consultants plan to introduce technologies so sophisticated that they can overwhelm the state's ability to oversee them, the state's going to wind up in a vulnerable position. Massachusetts would have been smart to introduce some checks and balances early on—perhaps splitting the work that Bechtel and Parsons were doing into smaller parts, having separate consultants for preliminary design and for "project management" work, or keeping some of the "management" in house. Instead, in the name of cost efficiencies, the state further blurred the distinction between public and private sectors by folding Bechtel and Parsons employees and its own workers into one "integrated project organization" in 1998. And though the state's Massachusetts Turnpike Authority was at the top of the new organization chart—which was immensely complicated by multiple layers of theoretical oversight, including supervision from federal highway officials as well as the feds' General Accounting Office—the state designated Bechtel and Parsons its "owner's representative" in some areas, complicating even further the answer to the straightforward question: Who was in charge?

Massachusetts's laissez-faire attitude followed from a fundamental misapprehension: that Bechtel and Parsons were their partners, not outside consultants, and were thus assuming some performance risk. In a 1994 interview, Kerasiotes, then the state's transportation secretary, argued that Bechtel's incentive to perform its job properly was its reputation: "Go to San Francisco, walk in the lobby" of Bechtel's headquarters, he suggested. "What you're going to see [are] prominent pictures of the Central Artery. . . . If they are causing this project to screw up, . . . they're not going to market themselves that way."

But Bechtel and Parsons never took on any performance risk—risk that the public sector carries as the ultimate funder and manager. If the project were an investment-banking deal, Bechtel would have been an advisor counseling a company on whether to undertake a merger, not an investor in that merger. "Our contractual responsibility as management consultant was to deliver a professional standard of care, not to guarantee the contractors' work," says Keith Sibley, Bechtel and Parsons's longtime Big Dig director. It's a crucial distinction: Bechtel and Parsons promised not perfect results but professional advisory and management work—and reasonable people may differ about what constitutes "professional." It's particularly difficult to assess decisions made under an "integrated project organization," where everything is opaque about who was responsible for which decisions, or whether particular decisions were the result of public and private collaboration.

This problem of murky responsibility came up repeatedly during the Big Dig, but most tragically with the ceiling collapse. Designers engineered a lightweight ceiling for the tunnel in which Milena del Valle died. But Massachusetts, annoyed by cost overruns and cleanliness problems on a similar ceiling, and at the suggestion of federal highway officials, decided to fit

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the new tunnel with a cheaper ceiling, which turned out to be heavier. Realizing that hanging concrete where no built-in anchors existed to hold it would be a difficult job, the ceiling's designer, a company called Gannett Fleming, called for contractors to install the ceiling with an unusually large built-in margin for extra weight. Shortly after contractors installed the ceiling—using anchors held by a high-strength epoxy, as Gannett specified—workers noticed that it was coming loose. Consultants and contractors decided to take it apart and reinstall it. Two years later, after a contractor told Bechtel that "several anchors appear to be pulling away from the concrete," Bechtel directed it to "set new anchors and retest." After the resetting and retesting, the tunnel opened to traffic, with fatal consequences.

In hindsight, they all did the wrong thing. The real problem was that the poorly labeled and poorly marketed "fast set" epoxy that the contractors used for the ceiling wasn't suitable for long-term loads of any type: the company that made the glue, Powers Fasteners, didn't warn clearly that the epoxy wasn't interchangeable with another, suitable "standard set" epoxy that it made. The National Transportation Safety Board's report noted the company's failure, and Massachusetts has indicted Powers for criminal negligence. But the feds also mentioned that neither Gannett nor Bechtel and Parsons had thought about the ceiling's long-term performance, when the earlier ceiling failures should have made it clear to both Bechtel and a construction contractor that reinstallation hadn't worked. Finally, the report points out, once the tunnel opened in 2003, Massachusetts was supposed to conduct regular inspections, which likely would have revealed the ceiling panels' obvious displacement well before the collapse.

Massachusetts, after taking a hands-off approach to its project's risks during construction, is today using its most fearsome power—the power to indict—to push Bechtel and Parsons to settle with the state for hundreds of millions of dollars and avoid criminal charges. Massachusetts's approach is a warning to future private-sector contractors and consultants: if something goes disastrously wrong with a project in which thousands of critical decisions were made with public and private cooperation, the state may use the criminal-justice system as a cudgel to deflect its own accountability.

Massachusetts might have avoided some problems by transferring certain Big Dig risks to the private sector through discrete, well-defined deals: signing a long-term contract with a firm to help build, operate, and maintain the Zakim Bridge, for instance. Such an endeavor, though, would have required aggressive public-sector management of initial costs, scope, and complex contract language—things the state hasn't excelled at.

Any risk transfer, moreover, would have been limited. Massachusetts could never have turned over full technical, operational, and financial risks of the Big Dig to any reputable company or group. The project had too many unknowns. Smart, reputable companies don't take unlimited risks at the behest of a fickle, indecisive client for a limited profit. The best thing Massachusetts could have done was to realize the project's real risks so that it could manage them effectively.

Now Democratic governor Deval Patrick has the most important job: monitoring the Big Dig's technologically pioneering infrastructure to make sure it's holding up now that drivers are using it every day, particularly since the NTSB report indicates a lack of attention to long-term performance in at least one "safety-critical" area, the fallen ceiling. A key question is whether the tunnels will hold up over time better than have the assets that so many states built so shabbily in the middle of the last century, such as the old Artery and the Tappan Zee Bridge that connects New York City to upstate. The Brooklyn Bridge has lasted, seemingly, forever: Will the Big Dig?

The wrong lesson to take from the Big Dig is that other states shouldn't bother with ambitious infrastructure. While the Big Dig's real worth will be measured in decades, its impact so far, three years after workers dismantled the Central Artery, shows its value. Travel time through downtown at afternoon rush hour is

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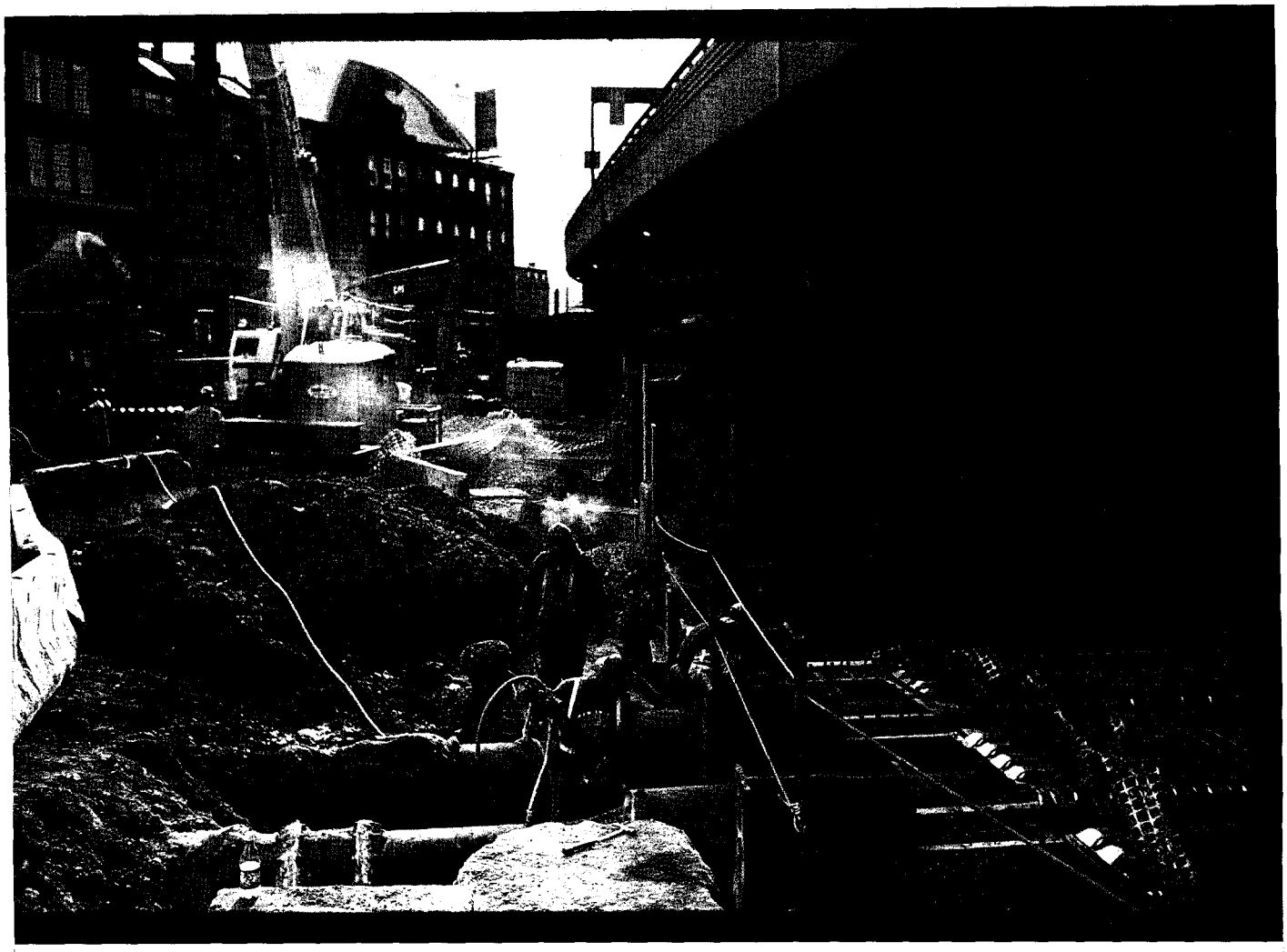

In a never-before-done feat, engineers jacked up the Central Artery to burrow a new highway underneath.

down from nearly 20 minutes to less than three, consistent with pre-construction estimates. Elsewhere on the underground highways, travel times are between one-quarter and two-thirds shorter; average speeds in some sections have shot from ten miles per hour to 43 (speed, rather than drivers' veering toward too many exits in slow traffic, is the tunnels' biggest safety problem). Airport trips are between one-half and three-quarters shorter. A 62 percent drop in hours spent on the new roads saves nearly $200 million annually in time and fuel.

For the first time in generations, downtown Boston viewed from above is unchoked by traffic. Cars zoom beneath the ground and reappear, emerging to leave the city over the Zakim Bridge. Downtown's biggest challenge is making sure that the still-unfinished "greenway" parks, where the Artery used to be, weave Boston, its waterfront, and its neighborhoods together again.

Investors and residents are responding positively to the infrastructure improvement. As the *Boston Globe* reported in 2004, commercial properties along the old Artery increased in value by 79 percent in 15 years, nearly double the citywide increase of 41 percent. Owners have reconfigured buildings to open views where they once bricked up windows, and are renovating property in other newly accessible parts of Boston. The North End's Italian restaurants are putting sidewalk cafés where they once hid from the Artery. The North End won't be the North End of 1950, though, just because the Artery is gone. "The Artery preserved us," says Fredda Hollander, a longtime resident. Tourists and well-heeled potential residents once put off by the physical and psychological barrier now happily wander over from other parts of the city, pushing up both commercial and residential prices.

By taking so long, Massachusetts has proven that infrastructure investments are for future generations. To longtime Bostonians, the new parkland may always be a marker of a phantom Artery, and the Big Dig may always be a scandal. But Boston is welcoming residents and visitors who know nothing about the Artery or the saga surrounding its successor. The state's and city's job is to make sure that the Big Dig runs smoothly in the future so that their new constituents don't have to learn about it.

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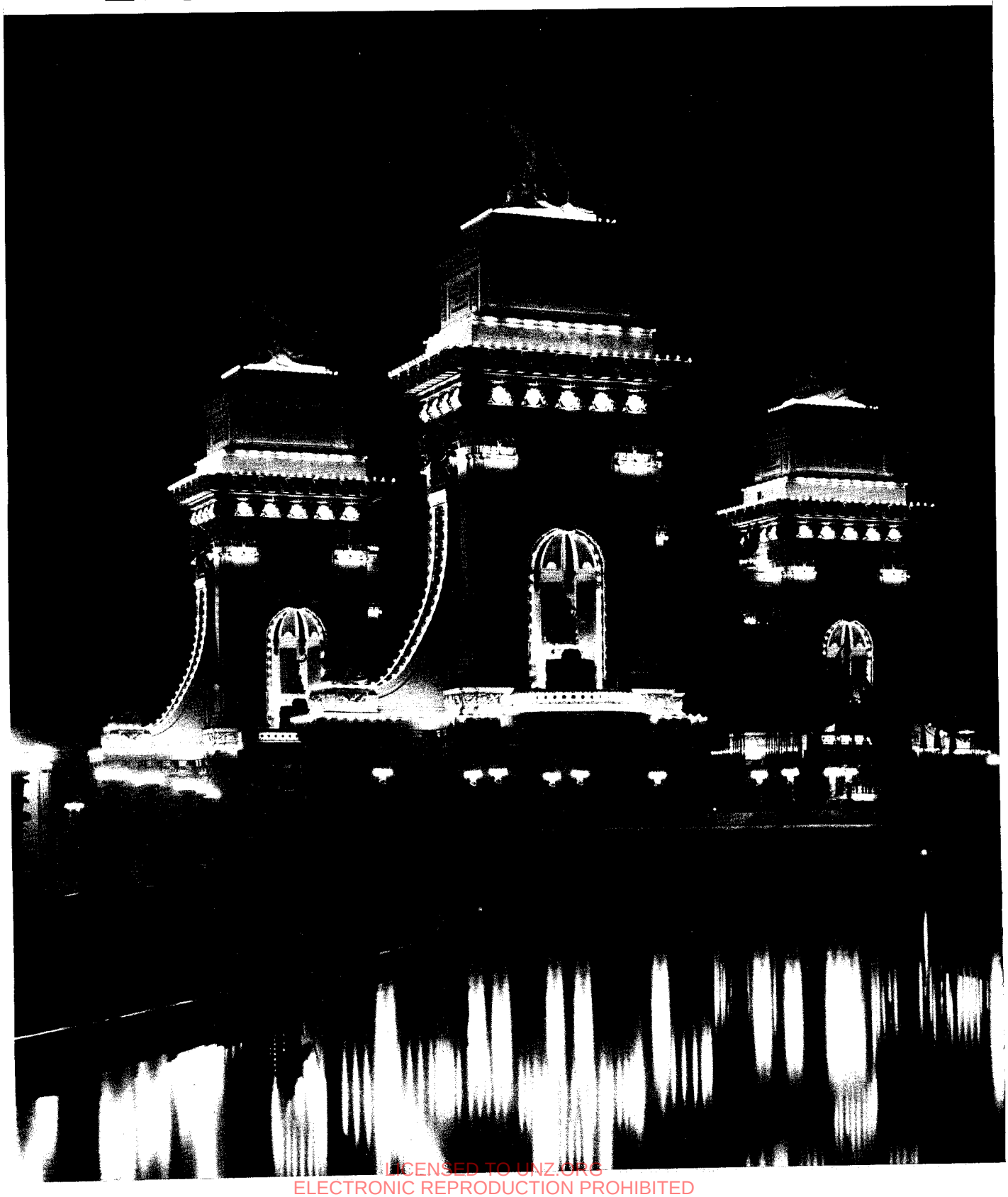
Can Buffalo Ever Come Back?



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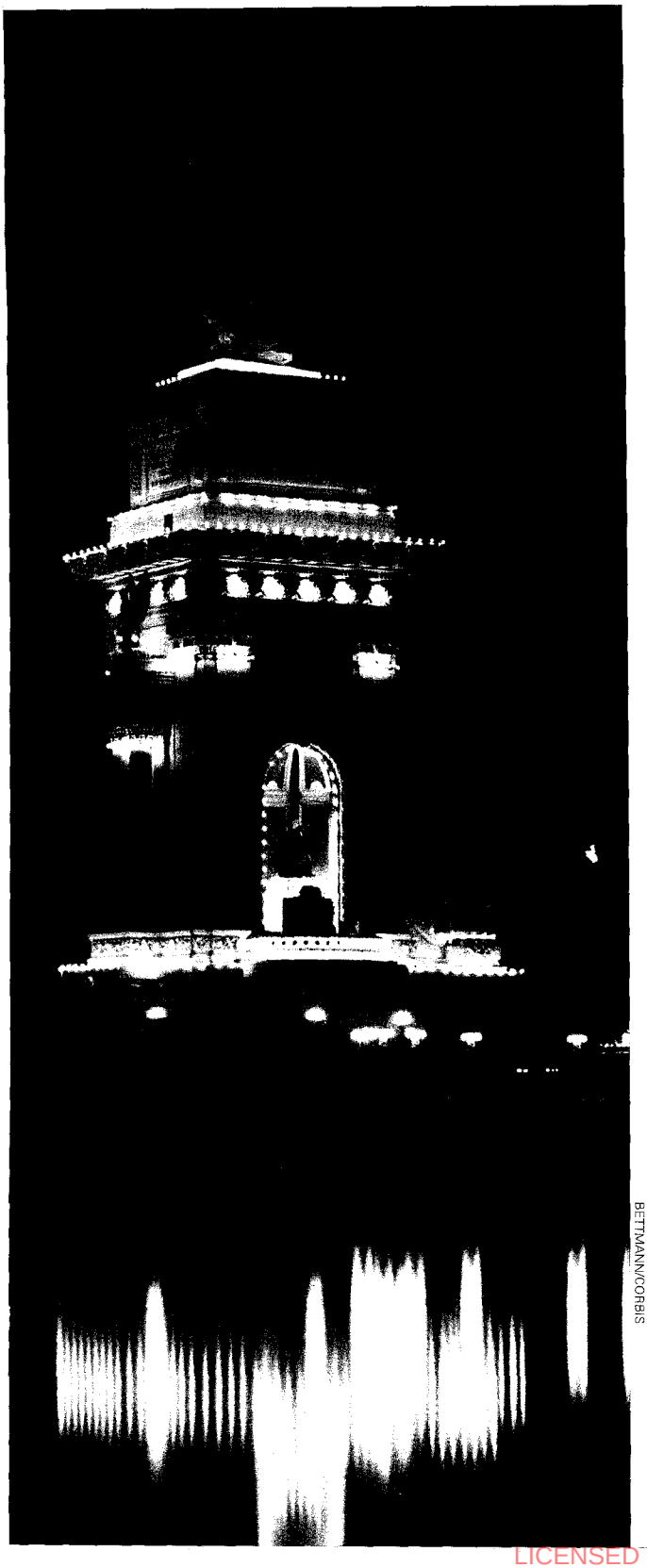

BETTMANN/CORBIS

In its heyday as a shipping and manufacturing center, Buffalo called itself the City of Light.

Probably not—and government should stop bribing people to stay there.

Edward L. Glaeser

At the onset of the Great Depression, Buffalo had 573,000 inhabitants, making it the 13th-largest city in America. In the 75 years that followed, this once-mighty metropolis lost 55 percent of its population, a decline most dramatic in its blighted inner city but also apparent in its broader metropolitan area, one of the 20 most quickly deteriorating such regions in the nation. Twenty-seven percent of Buffalo's residents are poor, more than twice the national average. The median family income is just $33,000, less than 60 percent of the nationwide figure of $55,000. Buffalo's collapse—and that of other troubled upstate New York cities like Syracuse and Rochester—seems to cry out for a policy response. Couldn't Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer use their influence on Capitol Hill to bring some needed relief?

The truth is, the federal government has already spent vast sums of taxpayer money over the past half-century to revitalize Buffalo, only to watch the city continue to decay. Future federal spending that tries to revive the city will likely prove equally futile. The federal government should instead pursue policies that help Buffalo's citizens, not the city as a geographical place. State and local policymakers could take steps that might—might—help Buffalo stave off its

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demise, if they avoid the errors of the past. But make no mistake: Buffalo faces long odds.

The history of Buffalo helps us understand why it continues to lose people and why it will be hard to reverse the trend. Historians often overstate the importance of the Erie Canal to New York City's expansion: Gotham grew just as quickly before the canal was dug. But there's no question that the canal, which connected Lake Erie to the Hudson River—and, therefore, the Great Lakes to the Atlantic—was a critical factor in the growth of upstate cities located on it, such as Buffalo. Before the canal, Buffalo had 2,500 residents and specialized in commerce along the Great Lakes. After the canal, the city's population exploded, reaching 8,600 people by 1830 and 18,000 by 1840. Many of those new residents helped transfer goods, especially wheat, from the large boats that plied the Great Lakes to the smaller, 50-ton barges that traveled eastward via the canal. By the early 1840s, Buffalo was moving 2 million bushels of grain a year from boat to barge. It was a revolution in transportation, even more dramatic than the railroads that later gave upstate New York towns vital access to eastern markets and the Atlantic seaboard.

At first, the grain moved by hand. But cities often foster innovation, and so it proved in Buffalo. In 1842, a local merchant, Joseph Dart, borrowed an idea from the brilliant Pittsburgh miller Oliver Evans, installing a steam-driven machine that scooped wheat out of cargo ships on Lake Erie and then dumped it into a silo. Dart's grain elevators could handle 1,000 bushels daily, allowing ships to unload in a single day. They became a noticeable part of Buffalo's skyline and a key element of the city's emergence as the world's leading grain port.

During the early twentieth century, Buffalo first challenged, and then surpassed, Minneapolis as a mill town, and the canal was the main reason. Since so much wheat flowed through Buffalo, it made sense to start milling it there and then to ship the flour onward. Almost half of Buffalo's wheat left the country, much of it sailing across the Atlantic to European markets.

Over time, the city's water-based transportation advantages also encouraged heavy industrial development. The Lackawanna Steel and Iron Company, for instance, relocated its center of operations from Scranton, Pennsylvania, to Buffalo early in the twentieth century. The upstate city's canal location made it easy to ship iron there from the Lake Michigan area, and to turn it into steel with the aid of coal transported north from Pennsylvania.

Buffalo had an extra geographic advantage that helped make it an early-twentieth-century powerhouse: Niagara Falls. The rushing water was a potent source of energy, harnessed to produce the electricity that surged through an enormous underground tunnel to power the city. By 1901, Buffalo took to calling itself the City of Light, so abundant was the electricity delivered by the falls and Westinghouse generators. The electricity would be an added draw for firms, such as Union Carbide and the Aluminum Company of America, that needed plentiful power.

The 1920s were the last real growth period for Buffalo. During the thirties, the city's population began to level off, and after its 1950 high of 580,000, it began to fall precipitously—down 50,000 people by the end of the decade. Buffalo's worst decade was the 1970s, when it lost 100,000 residents and much of its middle class. Today, its population stands well under 300,000.

A major culprit in Buffalo's collapse was a shift in transportation technology, reducing the importance of the Erie Canal and of the cities that arose to take advantage of it. In the 1830s, you would have been mad to set up a manufacturing firm in New York State that didn't have access to the canal or some other waterway. Starting in the 1910s, though, trucks made it easy to deliver products and get deliveries—all you needed was a nearby highway. Rail became more efficient: the real cost of transporting a ton one mile by rail has fallen 90 percent since 1900. Then the Saint Lawrence Seaway opened in 1957, connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic and allowing grain shipments to bypass Buffalo altogether. These shocks didn't just hit the New York canal cities; every city on the Great Lakes

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and the Mississippi River, its water-based advantages eroded, lost industries to areas with cheaper labor costs.

Other trends compounded Buffalo's woes. Improvements in electricity transmission made companies' proximity to Niagara Falls increasingly irrelevant. Mechanization meant that the industry that did remain in the city needed fewer bodies. The appeal of the automobile induced many to leave the older center cities for the suburbs, where property was plentiful and cheaper, or to abandon the area altogether for cities like Los Angeles, built around the car. And Buffalo's dismal weather didn't help. January temperatures are one of the best predictors of urban success over the last half-century, with colder climes losing out—and Buffalo isn't just cold during the winter: blizzards regularly shut the city down completely. The invention of air conditioners and certain public health advances made warmer states even more alluring.

In general, when cities shrink, poverty isn't far behind, for two reasons—one obvious, the other subtler. The obvious reason: urban populations fall because of relocation of industry and drop in labor demand; as jobs vanish, people living in a city get poorer. The subtler reason: declining areas also become magnets for poor people, attracted by cheap housing. This is exactly what happened to Buffalo, whose median home value is just $61,000, far below the state average of $260,000. More than 10 percent of Buffalo's residents in 2000, it's worth noting, had moved there since 1995. The influx of the poor reinforces a city's downward spiral, since it drives up public expenditures while doing little to expand the local tax base.

State and local government did little to improve Buffalo's chances—in fact, they worsened things considerably. First, New York's high taxes, burdensome regulations, and pro-union laws made Buffalo less attractive to employers than its more successful southern competitors. In 1975, the Fantus Legislative Business Climate rankings sorted the American states based on corporate taxes, workers' compensation laws, and many other rules. New York was the least business-friendly of the 48 states in the continental U.S. Being antibusiness might have been feasible when New York enjoyed strong natural advantages, but not after those advantages eroded. Despite 50 years of population loss, Buffalo has one of the steepest metropolitan tax burdens in the country—including one of the nation's highest local property tax rates, according to a 2003 study.

Buffalo also suffered from lousy local politics. During the 1960s, the city government failed to deliver either safety or good schools. Race riots shook the area, and crime rose steadily. Fiscal crises became epidemic. Buffalo had difficulty recruiting police because of low wages and the dangers of the street. Leadership was especially dismal during the late sixties and early seventies, the city's worst years. Mayor Frank Sedita, who faced ceaseless fiscal problems and surging violence from 1966 to 1973, was a traditional urban politician, better at playing to the city's various ethnicities than at confronting its ongoing crisis.

As the 1970s went on, cities began to acknowledge, however grudgingly, that the high costs of concentrated poverty made it disastrous to keep repelling the well-off and attracting the poor. The exodus of the middle class and businesses led many cities to repudiate tax-and-spend left-liberal politicians, who had dominated urban politics in the sixties, in favor of pragmatic leaders promising a better deal for more prosperous residents. In 1977, for instance, New York City voters rejected left-liberals Abe Beame and Bella Abzug and elected reformer Ed Koch. And in Buffalo's mayoral race that year, voters rejected a left-leaning Democrat, Arthur Eve, and embraced James Griffin, the law-and-order candidate of the Conservative and Right-to-Life Parties. Like Koch, Griffin focused on improving basic city services, such as public safety, and encouraging business investment.

But while Koch presided over the first sparks of New York's eventual Giuliani-era renaissance,

Research for this article was supported by the Brunie Fund for New York Journalism.

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Buffalo remained mired in poverty and dysfunction because, unlike the Big Apple, it lacked a healthy private sector. Manhattan's financial-services sector created an engine of economic success, with innovation following innovation. During the 1960s, investors developed more accurate ways to assess risk, which in turn made it possible for Michael Milken to find a wider market for riskier bonds. Those high-risk bonds then enabled the corporate takeover movement of the 1980s, which created huge amounts of value by cutting managerial fat and forcing greater efficiencies on firms across America. Later still, the same finance-based innovation dynamo brought more economic success to Manhattan with mortgage-backed securities and hedge funds. New York City, in other words, transformed itself from a manufacturing center into a place that thrived on producing new ideas.

The other old, cold cities that staved off decline, like Boston and Minneapolis, similarly reinvented themselves, with the density that once served to move cargo onto ships now helping spread the latest ideas. The key ingredient: human capital. The cities that bounced back did so thanks to smart entrepreneurs, who figured out new ways for their cities to thrive. The share of the population possessing college degrees in the 1970s is the best predictor of which northeastern and midwestern cities have done well since then.

Buffalo wasn't a particularly skilled city in 1970, and it isn't one now. Fewer than 19 percent of the city's adults boast a college degree; the number in Manhattan is 57.5 percent. Whereas New York always had some industries, such as finance, that required brainpower, Buffalo's industries were invariably brawn-based. Buffalo wasn't a university town like Boston, and it didn't have Minneapolis's Scandinavian passion for good lower education. It had the right skill mix for making steel or flour, not for flourishing in the information age.

Since the 1950s, the federal government has showered billions upon billions of dollars on Buffalo and other failing cities, seeking to revitalize them. The spending reflected a natural, humane impulse. But none of it worked, as Buffalo's entrenched poverty and shrinking population testify.

In 1957, for example, the federal Urban Renewal Association provided more than $9 million ($65 million in today's dollars) to rebuild the Ellicott district in the city's downtown area. The Ellicott rehabilitation followed what became the classic urban renewal script—replacing slums with middle-income housing, commercial development, and more open space. The program removed 2,000 residents, the majority of them black, and relocated many to new public-housing projects. Yet just ten years later, officials were describing the program as a "dismal failure." Despite millions spent, living conditions for the poor seemed no better, and the city certainly wasn't on the mend.

After Ellicott, Buffalo, with Washington's help, turned its attention to redeveloping its waterfront. In 1969, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development supported the construction of the 40-story Marine Midland Center, a bank headquarters designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Twenty-seven years later, the public contributed more than $50 million to build the Marine Midland Arena nearby to house hockey's Buffalo Sabres. While the public money created splendid waterfront edifices, it did little to stem residents' flight from the city.

Buffalo's metropolitan rail system, which opened in 1985, is the most expensive of the city's revitalization efforts. The system took over six years and $500 million to build, with most of the money coming from Washington. Many have lauded the system for its cleanness and efficiency. But why sink so much money into rail lines when Buffalo has lots of highways and abundant parking? The system's ridership has been declining steadily for over a decade.

All this spending aimed at resurrecting Buffalo *as a place*—very different from government aid that seeks to help disadvantaged *people*, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit—was destined to fail. Urban migrations aren't random. America's deserts and mountain ranges aren't densely inhabited for a good reason: few people want to live in such harsh

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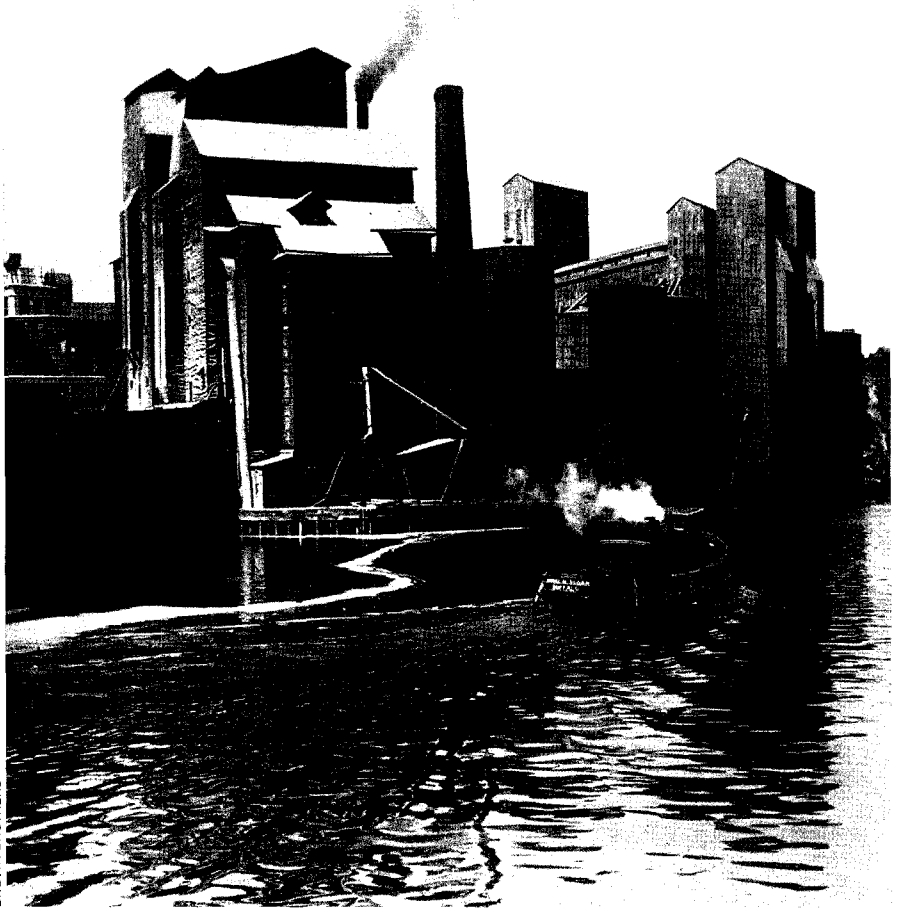
places. Similarly, people and firms are leaving Buffalo for the Sunbelt because the Sunbelt is a warmer, more pleasant, and more productive area to live. The federal government shouldn't be bribing them, in effect, to stay in the city.

Such bribes are notoriously ineffective. Scores of close to worthless urban projects have received government funding not because any cost-benefit analysis has justified them but because of hazy claims that they would make some once-great area thrive again. It's almost impossible to imagine that the billions already spent on Buffalo's urban-renewal projects would satisfy any reasonable cost-benefit analysis for helping to reverse the city's decline. The desire of people and firms to move is just too strong. For the government to tear down old houses and build new ones in a place like Buffalo is particularly misguided. The hallmark of declining cities is having an excess of housing relative to demand. Econ 101 teaches us that any further increases in housing supply will just push prices down more.



BROWN BROTHERS

Towering elevators, handling 1,000 bushels of wheat daily, made Buffalo the world's leading grain port.

No mayor ever got reelected by making it easy for his citizens to move to Atlanta, of course, even when that might be a pretty good outcome for the movers themselves. But just because local pols will eagerly seek federal place-based spending doesn't mean that the feds should comply. A sensible federal approach for upstate New York would invest in people-based policies that improve the economic futures of the children growing up there. Education is the best tool we have to fight poverty. If the children of upstate cities were better educated, then they would earn more as adults—whether they stayed in their hometowns or moved to Las Vegas. And people-based policies may actually motivate states and cities to spend more wisely, in order to retain their newly educated and mobile residents.

As for state and local politicians, reducing New York's unnecessary taxes and regulation would be a good idea, since if Buffalo is ever to rebound, even somewhat, private innovators, not government projects, will be the primary reason. Better schools and safe streets would also be key to improving Buffalo's chances of survival. Yet though such policies would improve things, they would not restore the boomtown of the early twentieth century; the economic trends working against such a prospect are simply too great. The best scenario would be for Buffalo to become a much smaller but more vibrant community—shrinking to greatness, in effect. Far better that outcome than wasting yet more effort and resources on the foolish project of restoring the City of Light's past glory.

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Denver Tackles Crime, New York Style

With grassroots support, a Democratic mayor embraces the policing revolution.

Alec Magnet

New York City's policing revolution is 13 years old now and by any objective measure a phenomenal success, with major crimes down by 74 percent since 1993. Even as the decline in crime nationwide started flattening out in 2000 and many cities saw their 1990s gains erode, crime in Gotham continued to fall. Still, critics deny that policing can cut crime. They attribute Gotham's remarkable turnaround to the end of the crack epidemic, the strong economy of the Clinton years, or the number of potential criminals who have not been born since abortion became legal. Worse, they argue, New York–style law enforcement is racist: policing quality-of-life offenses and sending more cops to crime-ridden areas, they say, inevitably singles out minority residents for racial profiling and police harassment.

So it is even more remarkable that Denver, Colorado—home to America's most liberal marijuana laws and an electorate that has sent Democrats to the mayor's office in every election since 1963—has in the past year and a half enacted a series of policing reforms based on New York's success, with surprisingly wide support, especially from the city's poor and minority residents. In particular, the Denver PD has instituted Broken Windows and Compstat policing—so far, to good effect. Major crimes dropped 14 percent from 2005 to 2006, and another 13.7 percent for the first eight months of this year compared with the same period last year. If Mayor John Hickenlooper's reelection this spring with 87 percent of the vote is any guide, popular support remains strong for the policing policies that, along with education reform, were the most prominent planks in his campaign platform.

And who sparked this policing reform? A group of plucky Hispanic high school kids who wanted their neighborhood safe, a grassroots organization that believes in helping people help themselves, and above all a former city official who describes himself as a "political progressive."

Hickenlooper, a 55-year-old restaurateur and developer first elected mayor in 2003, had not run at first as a police reformer. But policing issues forced themselves upon him. After cops killed two Denverites in separate, high-profile incidents in 2003 and 2004—one just days before he took office—Hickenlooper began mulling over changes in policing strategy. Moreover, he had a crime problem as well as a policing problem. After almost a decade of falling crime in the 1990s, Denver, a city of about half a million people, saw crime begin to climb again in 2000. By early 2005, violent crime was up 42 percent compared with five years before, and burglary 49 percent. With one crime reported for every 15 residents in 2005, according to the FBI, Denver had a higher crime rate than Las Vegas, Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia.

A stabbing brought these problems into public focus. In early September 2005, at an after-school soccer practice outside Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in the rough Westwood neighborhood, a group of gang members started

GEORGE KOCHANIEC, JR./ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS/POOL, 8/15/06

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Denver's Special Crime Attack Teams patrol dangerous neighborhoods.

hassling Lisette Mendoza, one of the team's players. When Victor Flores, then 19, tried to get between the gangbangers and Mendoza, they stabbed him nine times—steps from the church's front door, in full view of his teammates—and fled. He survived and has since recovered.

Horrified that such an attack could happen literally at their church's doorstep, Saint Anthony's called in Mateos Alvarez, a community organizer for a nonprofit group called Metro Organizations for People ("Mop"), for advice about the crime in their neighborhood—home to about 15,000 people, three-quarters of them Hispanic and one-quarter living under the poverty line. "We didn't feel safe, so we looked for help," says Teresita Chavira, who was 16 when she witnessed the stabbing. "We were like, 'This is going to be the final point. We shouldn't be scared of them. This is where we say it's all going to end.' "

With 11 staffers and a $750,000 budget, Mop works with Denver-area churches, schools, and youth and neighborhood associations to solve community problems. On its website, Mop answers the question, "What is community organizing?" with an expanded (and gender-neutral) version of the ancient Chinese proverb, "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a night; if you teach a man to fish, you feed him for the rest of his life." Mop adds: "If you are thinking 100 years ahead, educate people. . . . By educating people, you will harvest one hundredfold."

In that spirit, Alvarez met with about 20 parishioners a few days after the stabbing. "I advised them on how to make an impact on their community without going for what people traditionally go for, which is a service model," he says. "Instead, they said, 'We're going to use this experience to begin to change the culture of our community ourselves and make it safe for everybody.' "

A core group of about a dozen high school students and recent grads quickly formed, with Chavira and her younger sister Brenda as leaders, along with their friends Claudia Perez and Yasmin Solis. Calling themselves the Saint Anthony's Public Safety Committee, they met each Sunday with Alvarez. At first, they wanted to form a neighborhood-watch patrol, but Alvarez persuaded them instead to try to change the way their neighborhood was policed.

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Alvarez started studying policing. Rosemary Rodriguez, then Westwood's city councilwoman, put him in touch with the police commander for the area, Rudy Sandoval, who was interested in trying new policing strategies, and with Shepard Nevel, who would become the major force behind Denver's policing reform. Nevel had been advocating that the city adopt Broken Windows and Compstat policing since 1998, when he went to work for the previous mayor, Wellington Webb. Despite his left-of-center politics, Nevel admired how effective these techniques had proved in New York.

Developed by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling, the Broken Windows theory, which undergirded New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani and former police commissioner William Bratton's quality-of-life and zero-tolerance policing, posits that cracking down on minor crimes such as vandalism creates an atmosphere of law and order that discourages major crime. Compstat, short for "computerized statistics," refers not only to the technology that monitors crime patterns by location but also to the philosophy that cops can prevent crime by policing aggressively where it occurs—and that precinct commanders should hold cops accountable for doing so, which in New York they do at weekly crime-report meetings.

Now working in the private sector, Nevel watched the numbers with mounting concern as crime continued to rise. In January 2005, he suggested that Hickenlooper hire Kelling, a Rutgers criminal-justice professor (and Manhattan Institute fellow), to help revamp Denver's policing strategy. Kelling's consulting firm, the Hanover Justice Group, had advised the Los Angeles Police Department, and has since begun work in Milwaukee, Boston, and Allentown, Pennsylvania.

It took Nevel nine months to convince Hickenlooper that Kelling and New York–style policing would be Denver's best bet. He succeeded, he says, because he could cite data to prove that such policing worked. "I had the best product," he says. "I had what the generation before me didn't have: numbers from New York—from *City Journal*, by the way. I had ready answers, even in the first meeting."

He also had, by the autumn of 2005, the well-publicized support of Mop and the Saint Anthony's teens for a dramatic push against crime. The day after he formally presented his plan to Hickenlooper, Nevel met with the Saint Anthony's Public Safety Committee to explain Compstat and the Broken Windows theory. He gave them a 2005 *City Journal* article and two Manhattan Institute bulletins reprinting speeches by Kelling, Wilson, and Bratton, among others.

In November, the teens' Public Safety Committee called a meeting at Saint Anthony's. More than 150 people, many of them Spanish speakers, showed up. Councilwoman Rodriguez, precinct commander Sandoval, and Nevel were there, along with representatives of the mayor's office. Victor Flores, still in bandages, gave a compelling speech, saying that he wanted people not to see him as a victim but rather to learn from his experience and make Westwood safer. The girls gave a PowerPoint presentation on Broken Windows policing. "We were afraid people would think it meant no tolerance," Chavira says. "But we showed them the good points. The people I know thought it was a really good program." Later, the young people met with Mayor Hickenlooper, who had already decided to give Kelling a try. They persuaded him to make Westwood the spot for one of his pilot programs.

Hickenlooper, with money from the nonprofit Denver Police Foundation, hired Kelling's Hanover Justice Group. The two Hanover consultants who spearheaded the work in Denver were Mike Wagers, who heads the Police Institute, a crime-fighting think tank based at Rutgers, and Robert Wasserman, former chief of staff of the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy. They set up two neighborhood pilot programs and transformed the Denver PD's Command Operation Review and Evaluation—or Core—meetings into something more like New York's Compstat. City and police officials still keep in close touch with Kelling, Wagers, and Wasserman.

The pilot program in Westwood began in late February 2006. Before it started, however,

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officers went around the neighborhood knocking on doors, chatting, and handing out a survey to learn what complaints residents had about crime and disorder—what street corners they feared to walk on at night, where they regularly saw kids dealing drugs, where they encountered vandalism, panhandling, litter, and noise. Much of the cops' work during the pilot program involved aggressive quality-of-life policing, as well as trying to anticipate and prevent crime instead of just responding to 911 calls. Commander Sandoval sent out two units called "Scat"—Special Crime Attack Team—that spoke to residents and examined crime data to figure out where offenses generally occurred, and then patrolled those areas relentlessly to discourage criminals or catch them in the act.

"'One of the greatest injustices is that you can have law-abiding, hardworking people who live in fear.'"

Over the program's 28 weeks, incidents in which officers took the initiative increased by 70 percent from the previous year. The result of all this work: crime in the neighborhood fell 21.4 percent, again compared with the year before. Contrary to what opponents of Broken Windows and Compstat would predict, not one civilian lodged a complaint against a cop in Westwood during that time.

The other pilot, this one still ongoing, focuses on drug dealing, prostitution, and quality-of-life crimes in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, and it encourages property and business owners to beautify the neighborhood and keep it clean. Crime there dropped 12.5 percent in 2006 and another 14.5 percent for the first eight months of this year.

The Westwood pilot program won approving editorials in both the liberal *Denver Post* and the more centrist *Rocky Mountain News*, and Flores, Chavira, and their friends appeared at a press conference to praise it. Residents of many other neighborhoods—especially poor and minority ones—lobbied for their locales to be next, and similar crime offensives are now under way in three Denver police districts.

The Kelling team's redesign of the Core meetings proved crucial. Now, precinct commanders meet every week with the police chief, deputy chief, and other city officials to report crime patterns in their districts, explain what tactics they're using to combat them, and answer often sharp questions about their decisions. "We have made significant strides in arming the police department with more accurate and fresher crime data," Hickenlooper says, "and we're setting the expectation that officers and managers will use that information to deploy resources more strategically."

Reports Jeremy Bronson, Hickenlooper's special assistant on public safety, "The meetings are changing practically weekly. We're still experimenting with what works best." Each commander now presents his district's crime statistics not only for the previous week but also for the previous 28 days and 12 months, in order to distinguish a trend from a weekly aberration. And the tone of the meetings has recently become less adversarial, with commanders having more control over the agenda and more time to pursue each goal. Among the rank and file, morale has picked up, too, now that the department gives cops clear information about crime and expects them to take the initiative and do something about it. "For many police officers that is a very empowering thing," Bronson says. "That's exactly the sort of trust and encouragement one should give to public-safety officers."

In Shepard Nevel's view, "Assertive policing is one of the most progressive things you can do. I believe that one of the greatest injustices is that you can have law-abiding, hardworking people who live in fear and are not safe." After all, lawlessness hits minorities and the poor hardest. Blacks and Hispanics (40 percent of Denver's population) are the victims of many

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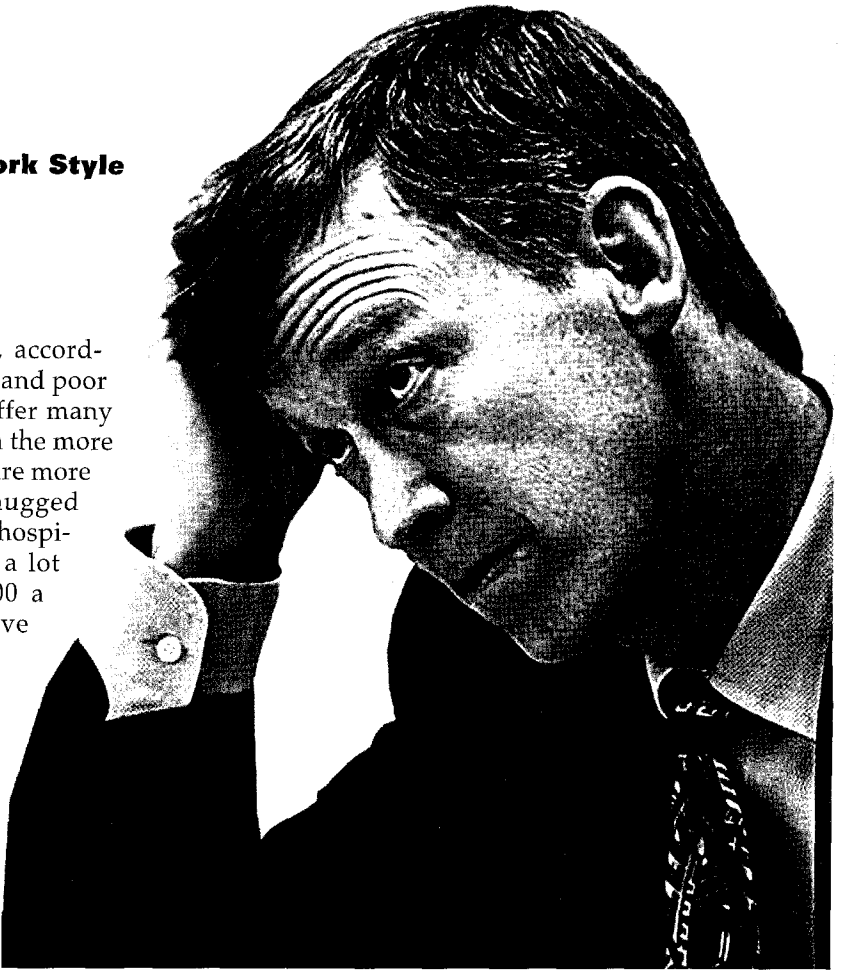

Mayor John Hickenlooper heard the entreaties of Hispanic teens fed up with local crime.

more crimes per capita than whites, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and poor people (14 percent of Denverites) suffer many more crimes against their person than the more prosperous (though property crimes are more evenly distributed). Plus, getting mugged for $50—or being stuck with a $2,000 hospital bill after an assault—makes life a lot harder for someone earning $20,000 a year than for someone earning five times that.

Nevertheless, critics condemn Broken Windows and Compstat policing as inherently bigoted. Cops, they say, unfairly single out the poor and minorities not because such people are more likely to commit crimes but out of their own institutionally sanctioned bigotry. Activist policing is not just unhelpful, such critics say; it is immoral and must be stopped.

For example, even as plummeting crime numbers were revitalizing New York City—especially its poorest, most crime-ridden neighborhoods—left-wingers and self-appointed minority advocates accused Gotham's police of racism and tyranny. "There is an awful sickness coursing through the NYPD," columnist Bob Herbert wrote in the *New York Times* in 1996. "The department has gotten more brutal, not less, . . . because no one has stepped forward to make it clear to the sadists and the sociopaths and the raging, howling racists in the Police Department that their murderous behavior will not be tolerated."

Jeremiads veered into conspiracy theories. Eddie Ellis, president of a Harlem-based advocacy group called the Community Justice Center, suggested to *Newsday* in 1995 that New York City's policing was a racist ploy to get rid of blacks and Latinos by confining them to the state prison system, "a multiple billion dollar industry that provides jobs and contracts and patronage in upstate Republican areas." And after the police shooting of soon-to-be-married Sean Bell outside a Queens nightclub last November, the Reverend Al Sharpton absurdly claimed that minorities had as much to fear from the police as from robbers. Outside the court where the three officers who shot Bell appeared in April, the *New York Times* reported, protesters chanted: "Today's pigs, tomorrow's bacon."

Though none of these charges is true—not just crime but also shootings by police declined in Gotham during the Giuliani administration and after—the anger and ideological prejudices of activist policing's opponents can stymie change where leftist attitudes predominate. Take ultra-liberal San Francisco, for example, where Mayor Gavin Newsome is attempting the modest reform of establishing a community court that would crack down on quality-of-life crimes in the seedy downtown Tenderloin neighborhood. Newsome's model is Gotham's Midtown Community Court, a very moderate institution that combines punishments of community service—and, rarely, jail time—with counseling and job training. Its efficient handling of petty crimes helped resuscitate Times Square in the mid-nineties. Newsome's critics say that the proposed court will "criminalize poor people simply for being poor," the *San Francisco Chronicle* reports. They're shocked, they say, "that a city like San Francisco would choose a hard-core Republican"—that is,

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Giuliani—"as a model for how to deal with social problems." Chris Daly, a community-court skeptic and San Francisco Board of Supervisors member, told the *Chronicle*, "This proposal is dead on arrival."

How, then, in Denver, did a bunch of liberal Democrats successfully institute New York–style policing reform, with overwhelming support not just from homeowners and the business community, but from poor minorities who live in blighted neighborhoods?

For one thing, as Nevel observes, "This city doesn't have as sharp-elbowed grievance groups" as New York's, which threaten violence (as city councilman Charles Barron did after the Bell shooting) and throw feces at effigies of the mayor (as the hatchet-job film *Giuliani Time* lovingly documents). With three times as many Hispanics as African-Americans in Denver, many of the city's activist groups that speak—or claim to speak—for minorities lack the loathing for and suspicion of the police that simmer in many of today's black partisans.

Without an entrenched class of reflexively oppositional race activists, Denver could thus have a real conversation about crime and policing. Policymakers found that, when vitriol or demagoguery did not drown out the voices of ordinary poor and minority residents, they said that they wanted safe neighborhoods, and for the city to use tactics that experience showed would work best to protect them from the tyranny of lawlessness. In Denver, that desire proved so strong that it erupted in grassroots advocacy for New York–style policing from the very people whom Al Sharpton and his ilk depend on to oppose it—minorities and the poor.

Some predictable opposition has finally cropped up, though. In April, members of the Colorado Progressive Coalition (which advocates "racial, economic, environmental, and social justice") staged a leafleting campaign that denounced the Broken Windows theory. "More aggressive police will not make our neighborhoods stronger or safer," the pamphlet reads. "'Broken Windows Policing' targets low-level offenses and leads to an increase in racial profiling, youth harassment, police brutality fines, and arrests of those most vulnerable in our neighborhoods. We can't arrest and ticket our problems away."

Hickenlooper and the police understand the damage that even such mild opposition can do, and they have been working to assuage it. They've stopped using the term "Broken Windows," emphasizing Compstat-based techniques instead. In May, the mayor and his staff met with two dozen activists to hear their concerns. "The group wanted to look at other solutions to community problems beyond law enforcement," reports mayoral public-safety aide Bronson, and they wanted cops out of their cars doing foot patrols and building relationships as well as confronting suspicious behavior. "These are all tenets of the program we're implementing," Bronson says, "but the Broken Windows debate has interfered with our ability to reach common ground more quickly."

Officials have also addressed fears about increased police presence in neighborhoods that are home to illegal immigrants, as Colorado has the toughest immigration law of any state. Officers have taken care to explain to residents of these neighborhoods that they won't turn illegals over to the feds if they report a crime. State law requires cops to refer to Immigration and Customs Enforcement only those whom they have arrested for another crime and also suspect of being illegal immigrants. "Cultural transformation and the institutionalization of change require time both to achieve and to demonstrate as having a sustained positive impact on community safety," Hickenlooper says.

It's inconceivable that the mayor, who consistently polls as one of Colorado's most popular politicians, will ever spark the antipathy that Giuliani did in New York. The only question is whether, should there be another tragic police shooting like those in Denver in 2003 and 2004, he would make the knee-jerk assumption that the police must have been at fault, as New York mayor Michael Bloomberg did after Sean Bell's killing. If Hickenlooper sticks to his guns, his policing reform will succeed.

EVAN SEMÓN/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS/POLARIS

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Urbanities

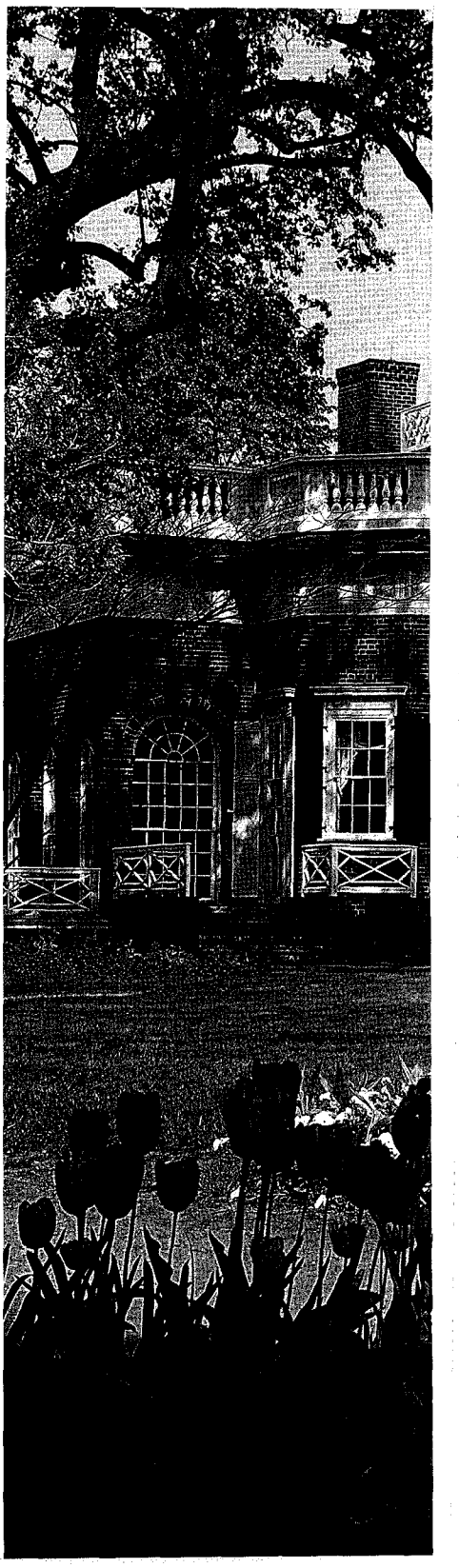
Monticello's Shadows

Myron Magnet

What Jefferson's fabled home reveals about the Founding Father's mind and heart

In the summer of 1786, still mourning his beloved wife's death four years earlier and soon to begin sleeping with her 15-year-old half-sister, his slave Sally Hemings, Thomas Jefferson fell in love with a beautiful English painter named Maria Cosway. Head over heels in love: for the 43-year-old minister to France tried to impress the twentysomething Maria by jumping a fence, and the resulting dislocated wrist troubled him the rest of his life. With his good hand, he wrote Maria a 4,500-word love letter, a half-mock philosophical "dialogue" in which his "Head" contends that he should have stuck to "intellectual pleasures" that "ride serene and sublime above the concerns of this mortal world," while his "Heart" replies, in highly charged terms, that the happiness of love is worth the pain of loss, and that "the solid pleasure of one generous spasm of the heart" outweighs all the philosopher's "frigid speculations." The letter, whose stated conflict stands for an unspoken conflict over Jefferson's love for a married woman, goes on to spin a fantasy that one day Maria will come and stay with him at Monticello, the mountaintop architectural masterpiece near Charlottesville, Virginia, that is the outward embodiment of this Enlightenment magus's brilliant mind. And like the letter to Maria, it, too, reveals the deep conflicts between its author's intellectual Head and the confused, darker realities that his philosophy can't resolve.

To walk through the house is to feel oneself in a microcosm of Jefferson's conception of the universe, a complex order whose parts mesh precisely, as one sees once one grasps the plan. With blueprint in hand I wandered from room to room, figuring out how the octagons fit together with the squares and rectangles to compose the balanced recessions and projections of the brick exterior, glowing deep red in the hot summer sunshine, beneath sparkling white pediments and dome. You can't feel closer to the Great Watchmaker of the



DAVID MUENCH/CORBIS

Monticello

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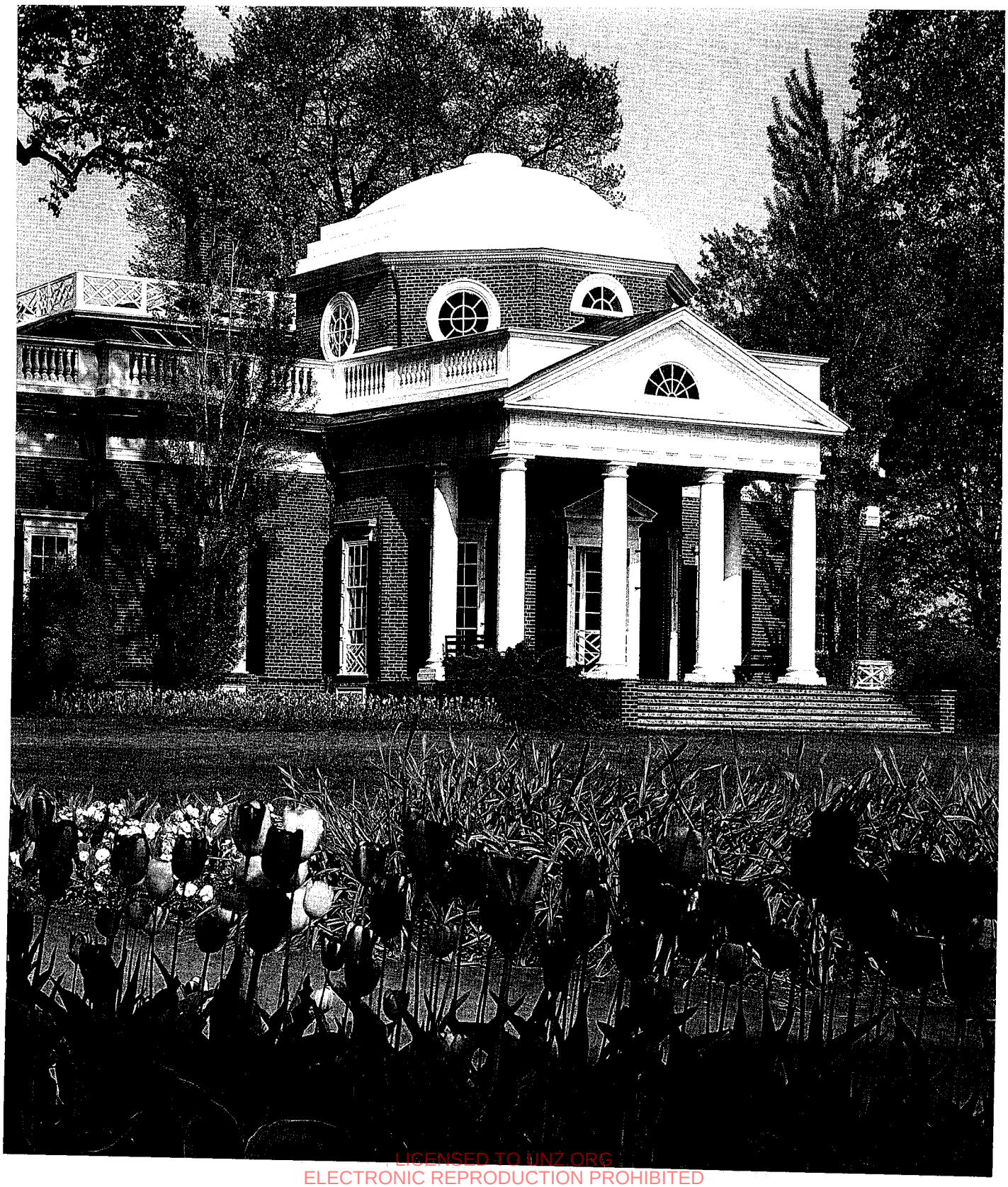
Urbanities



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eighteenth-century philosophers than in the demi-octagon of Jefferson's study, or "cabinet," with its beautifully crafted brass models of the universe—an armillary sphere whose rings show how the stars revolve over the earth, and an orrery, a clockwork model of the solar system in which tiny planets revolve around a little brass sun. Next to them stand a brass-mounted telescope and microscope to peer into the workings of that universe, along with compasses and other instruments to map out its structure.

Jefferson built his house on a mountaintop so that he could "look down into the workhouse of nature, to see her clouds, hail, snow, rain, thunder, all fabricated at our feet! and the glorious sun, when rising as if out of a distant water, just gilding the tops of the mountains, and giving life to all nature!" Such a late-eighteenth-century taste for the sublime didn't come cheap: Jefferson had to level the mountaintop to construct his house, and water, building materials, and supplies were costly and slow to get to the summit. But sitting in Monticello's always cool and breezy garden pavilion and looking out over the rolling clouds and Blue Ridge Mountains below, as Jefferson liked to do, you can see why he took the trouble.

In the parlor, a different set of precision instruments, a superb London-made harpsichord and a little American piano, speaks of the many evenings when Jefferson, a keen violinist, together with his musical daughters, filled the house with the eighteenth-century compositions whose complex architecture weaves an order and harmony that intimates another, transcendent, order and harmony. Certainly Jefferson understood that higher order. "When we take a view of the universe," he wrote, "it is impossible for the human mind not to perceive and feel a conviction of design, consummate skill, and indefinite power in every atom of its composition. The movements of the heavenly bodies, so exactly held in their course by the balance of centrifugal and centripetal forces; . . . insects, mere atoms of life, yet as perfectly organized as man or mammoth. . . . It is impossible, I say, for the human mind not to believe that there is in all this design, cause, and effect up to an ultimate cause, a Fabricator of all things . . . their Preserver and Regulator."

This is a rational universe, and human reason can grasp its laws. Jefferson set out to know them as fully as possible. Just beyond his cabinet, his cozy book room formed as complete a repository of what philosophers and naturalists had discovered of those laws as America could then boast. Jefferson owned not just the works of his intellectual heroes—Locke, Newton, and Bacon, pioneers of scientific rationalism—but also their portraits, hung high on Monticello's parlor walls. Assembled over 50 years from booksellers across Europe, the library became the nucleus of the Library of Congress when the debt-ridden ex-president had to sell its 6,487 volumes to the nation for $23,950 in 1814.

He was especially proud of his book room's works on America—dealing with "whatever belongs to the American statesman," he boasted—and he turned Monticello's airy two-story hall into a little museum of Americana. Big maps of the country adorned the walls, including one of Virginia as surveyed by his father. Prominently on display were the thighbone, jawbone, and tusk of a mastodon dug up in Kentucky—which clearly refuted, in Jefferson's view, the famed French naturalist Buffon's derogatory theory that the productions of nature had degenerated in the New World, so that plants, animals, and men were smaller, weaker, less various, less sexually ardent, and shorter-lived in the Americas than in Europe. Could Europe produce an animal so . . . mammoth? And how about the elk and moose, whose antlers bristled challengingly above the maps?

Most striking was Jefferson's display of Indian objects—pipes and headdresses, spears and buffalo robes—many brought back by Lewis and Clark, whose expedition he sent out in 1804 to plumb the vast lands gained in the Louisiana Purchase, his presidency's greatest (if not wholly constitutional) achievement. Jefferson admired the Indians'

MONTICELLO/THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION (2)

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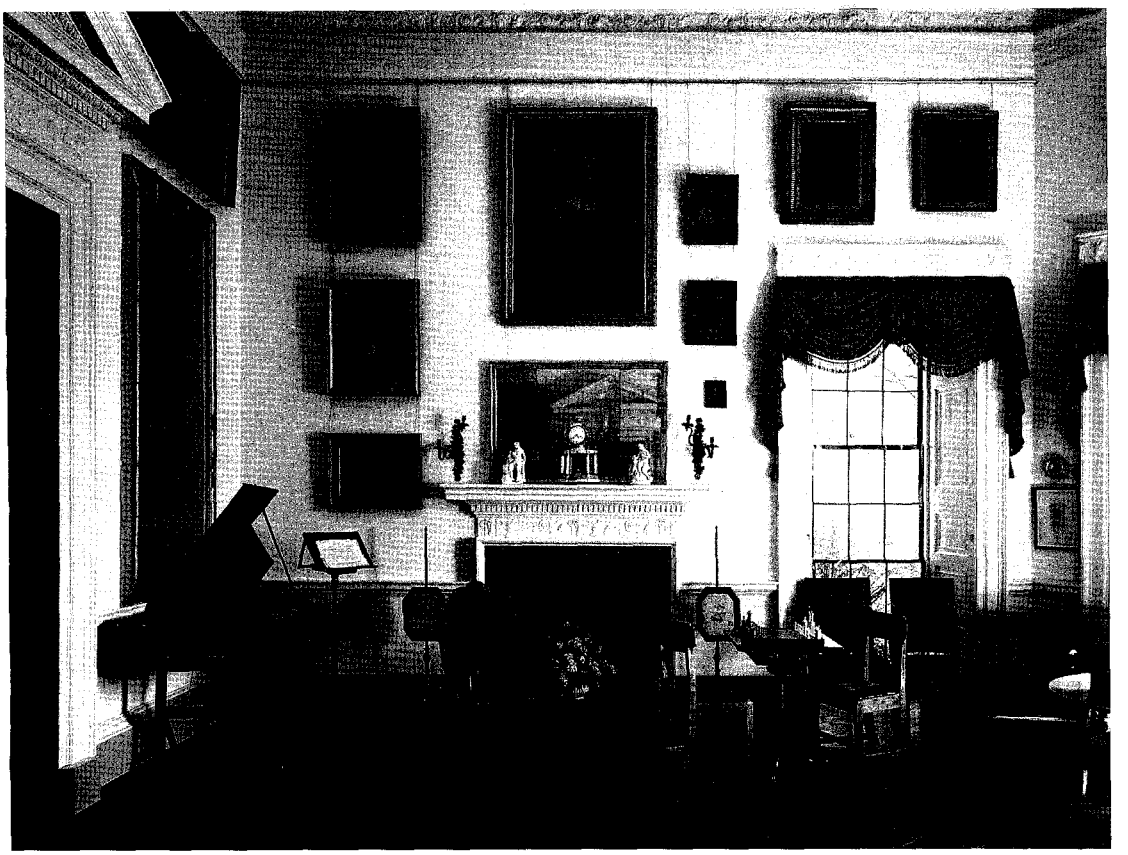

Jefferson's parlor, where he and his family made music, and his cabinet, a shrine to Reason

daring and eloquence, yet further refutation of Buffon's degeneration theory, and he liked being "the Great Father." He understood the Indians in terms of the Enlightenment theory of human "perfectibility," the idea that man, having developed through barbarism to civilization, can achieve yet higher development of intellect and refinement.

In fact, he wrote toward the end of his life, a trip across the American continent is a "survey, in time, of the progress of man from the infancy of creation to the present day." If a "philosophic observer" were to start with "the savages of the Rocky Mountains" and travel eastward, he would begin by seeing man "in the earliest stage of association, living under no law but that of nature," hunting animals for food and wearing their skins. He would next come upon men "in the pastoral state, raising animals to supply the defects of hunting. Then succeed our own

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semi-barbarous citizens, the pioneers of the advance of civilization, and so in his progress he would meet the gradual shades of improving man until he would reach his, as yet, most improved state in our seaport towns. . . . I have observed this march of civilization . . . passing over us like a cloud of light, increasing our knowledge and improving our condition. . . . And where this progress will stop no one can say." As for the Indians, the sooner they join the march of progress the better. They need to give up their hunting and communal agriculture and settle down to a life of private property and individual farms, with arithmetic and writing to keep accounts. And to speed the process, as president he sent out Christian missionaries to teach them to be less Indian and more American—to the continuing consternation of today's multiculturalists and strict separationists.

It's true that Jefferson had his moments of wanting to withdraw into "intellectual pleasures" that "ride serene and sublime above the concerns of this mortal world," as he told Maria Cosway: his taste for unworldly abstraction is nowhere clearer than inside Monticello's empty dome, a stupendous and costly exercise in pure geometry, breathtakingly beautiful with its giant, Michelangelesque baseboard and the light pouring in from its round windows and central oculus, but virtually unusable because its echoes make conversation impossible, it's unheated, and its access is steep and narrow. Even the sumptuous mahogany double doors built for symmetry opposite the dome's entrance open only onto a jumble of rafters and attics.

But usually Jefferson's intellectual pleasures fully engage the world: for him, the increase of knowledge is meant to improve man's condition. When Buffon "affected to consider chemistry but cookery," for instance, and to equate the laboratory with the kitchen, Jefferson took sharp issue; chemistry, he lectured the count, is "big with future discoveries for the utility and safety of the human race." Did not people justly esteem "Dr. Franklin's science because he always endeavored to direct it to something useful in private life"? Were not phosphorous matches, for example, a boon to mankind, and would not interchangeable musket parts, which he saw in France long before the Colt factory used them for mass production in America, change history?

Jefferson was himself an amateur inventor who designed a plow blade that needed less than half the pulling power of ordinary plows and a device that connected two pens, so that while you wrote with one, the other made a duplicate. "As a secretary which copies . . . what we write without the power of revealing it, I find it a most precious possession to a man in public business," he remarked. In addition, he constantly sought seeds and plants from abroad, looking for better fruits and grains for Americans to grow, from rice that didn't need disease-breeding paddies to olive trees and continental wine grapes that would flourish here. Presiding over the Senate as vice president and feeling the lack of a guide to parliamentary procedure, this compulsive improver wrote one that remains in use in the Capitol today.

But it was his special intellectual achievement—and that of the American Revolution, in his view—to use reason to bring the march of civilization to government. "We can surely boast of having set the world a beautiful example of a government reformed by reason alone, without bloodshed," he wrote. "We had no occasion to search into musty records, to hunt up royal parchments, or to investigate the laws and institutions of a semi-barbarous ancestry. We appealed to those of nature, and found them engraved on our hearts." What early Americans found, of course, when they directed their power of reason to political matters, were the self-evident truths of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence: that men are created equal and free. Their rights are not "the gift of their Chief Magistrate," he wrote in his 1774 pamphlet, *A Summary View of the Rights of British America* (over which that magistrate, George III, was still fuming 12 years later, when

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Jefferson met him), but are "derived from the laws of nature." Moreover, "Kings are the servants, not the proprietors of the people."

These truths were always true, but they were not always self-evident, since kings, aristocrats, and priests had obfuscated them. Intellectually, men had long slumbered in "the sleep of despotism," their minds "shackled by habit and prejudice," as Jefferson wrote of the French before their revolution. Not just external coercion but also a state of mind kept people unfree: in the 1760s, for instance, the American colonists' "minds were circumscribed within narrow limits by a habitual belief that it was our duty to be subordinate to the mother country," and to that day the Indians had remained in "barbarism" because of their "bigotry" in favor of "the practices of [their] forefathers" (like the Iraqis of today). So a revolution involved reforming not just political and social institutions but also the minds of the citizenry. It was in this spirit that Jefferson famously declared: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man." And in the last public letter he wrote, he was happy to say that "the general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately by the grace of God."

Shortly after writing the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson left the Continental Congress to join the Virginia legislature, aiming to carry out, as a model for the rest of the states, a program of liberation "by which every fibre would be eradicated of ancient or future aristocracy and a foundation laid for a government truly republican." He outlawed the inheritance practices of entail and primogeniture, which, by keeping land in the family and passing it undivided to the eldest son, served to perpetuate a landed aristocracy. He disestablished the Episcopal Church, on the ground that people had a natural freedom of opinion and should not be taxed to support a sect (and a snobbish one, at that) that they didn't believe in. On the same ground, he later tried, unsuccessfully, to repeal the laws against heresy, since "the opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction."

To wake up Virginians from the intellectual sleep of despotism, he envisioned an educational system that would make every child literate and numerate in three years and then send the ablest kids to tough regional grammar schools. The best of those who made it through six grueling years there would go on to college at William and Mary. Since all this schooling would be at public expense, the talented poor could rise to the top—"the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish," as Jefferson put it—and the aristocracy of wealth would have to make room for "the aristocracy of virtue and talent." More crucially, the ordinary Virginian would be well enough educated to understand that he was a free man with equal rights, a citizen not a subject. That's why a republic should fund education: "the tax which will be paid for this purpose," argued Jefferson, a limited-government libertarian in most other matters, "is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, priests, and nobles who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance." But his fellow legislators voted down his plan.

However decisive a step, the American Revolution did not achieve all the perfectibility of which man is capable—as how could it, since no one could foresee what heights mankind could reach? To progress further, men's minds must be left free to inquire and invent. "Reason and free inquiry," Jefferson pronounced, "are the only effectual agents against error." Accordingly, Jefferson didn't believe that Americans should hold even their own Constitution "too sacred to be touched." "Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, . . . institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times." In his most extreme

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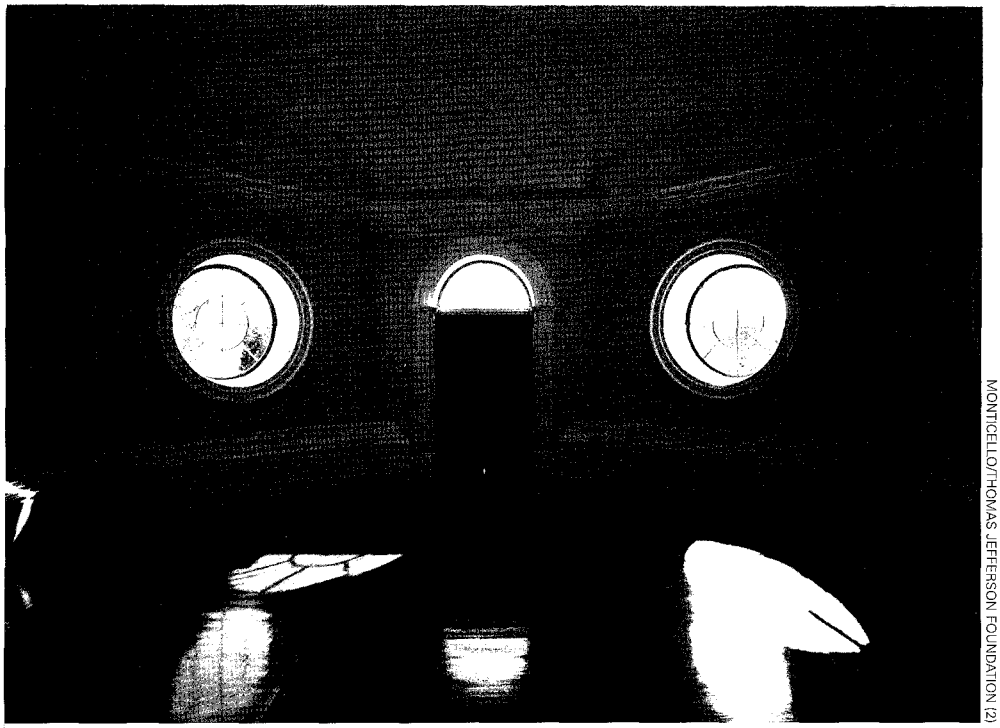

MONTICELLO/THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION (2)

The light and darkness of Monticello: its stupendous dome, an exercise in pure geometry; and its subterranean passages, used by Jefferson's slaves

mood, he believed that all the laws should expire after each generation, to be made anew. "Nothing then is unchangeable but the inherent and unalienable rights of man."

That implacable spirit of Enlightenment inquiry pervades Monticello in a way that dawns on you only gradually as you walk through the rooms. The house seems to be saying, as Goethe supposedly cried on his deathbed, More light! It's not just that there are few dark corners in a house made up of so many semi-octagons, but that Jefferson designed it so that light pours in from everywhere—through oversize windows and lots of them, through glass doors, through multiple skylights made up of glass louvers that let in the sunshine but keep out the rain, all reflected and bounced back across the rooms by mirrors everywhere, from huge ones in the parlor to mirrored panes in the two round windows flanking the door into the dome, where the building itself would have obscured clear glass ones. Nowhere is the flood of light more intense than in Monticello's exaggeratedly high dressing room, its ceiling mostly glass louvers. One can imagine the lanky Jefferson

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getting out of his bed between his cabinet and dressing room as soon as he could see the clock that hung at the bottom of his sleeping alcove, rinsing his feet in the basin of cold water that has stained the dressing-room floor, and bathing in light.

When he left the presidency in 1809 and returned to his native state, which he never again left, Jefferson threw himself into a new scheme for enlightening his fellow citizens, the University of Virginia, of which he was not just the founder and rector but also the architect of its buildings, supervisor of its construction, designer of its curriculum, recruiter of its faculty, and chief lobbyist with the state legislature. This "hobby of my old age," Jefferson said, "will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind to explore and to expose every subject susceptible of its contemplation." As architecture, it is breathtaking, a work of genius; beside its purity and delicacy even McKim, Mead, and White's later buildings, at a respectful distance, seem ponderous and flabby. Jefferson aimed to make the connected pavilions of his "academical village," each based on a different Roman model as built or drawn by Palladio, a concrete textbook of classical architecture, and indeed vast numbers of American houses for the next half-century seem to spring straight out of his designs.

But as an intellectual enterprise, the university proved less satisfactory to its creator when it opened the year before he died. The students turned out to be not so much an aristocracy of virtue and talent as a gang of rowdy young men with a taste for drink, gambling, breaking windows, firing guns into the air, and thrashing professors who tried to stop them. The horrified Jefferson came down from his mountain to Charlottesville to reprimand them. Flanked by his dear friends and fellow trustees, James Madison and James Monroe, the frail 82-year-old patriarch drew himself up to his full six foot two, began to speak, and burst into tears.

At Monticello, too, that temple of Enlightenment, there were dark spots. In Palladian fashion, two pavilions flank the main house, connected by L-shaped wings, which from the front appear to be low terraces, made for promenades. From the back, because of the mountain's slope, you can see that the wings are in fact covered passages that lead out of the cellar of the house and contain the semi-subterranean kitchen, dairy, and other rooms for those who waited on Jefferson. Since those latter were slaves, it's hard not to walk through these passages without thinking of H. G. Wells's *Time Machine*, with its airy, playful creatures of light enjoying the surface of the earth, while the dark Morlocks toil hidden beneath the surface, not to be spoken of.

Everyone knows about Monticello's gadgets—the cannonball-weighted clock visible both inside and outside the house, the double doors that open at one touch, thanks to a figure-of-eight chain joining them beneath the floorboards, the space-saving clothes closet built in above the alcove bed. But two of this inspired tinkerer's most famous contrivances—the little dumbwaiters hidden on either side of the dining-room fireplace to bring bottles of wine up from the cellar, and the lazy-Susan pantry door on whose shelves platters of food could be laid and then rotated into the dining room—seem designed to keep the slaves out of sight and out of mind, hiding even from its master the grim reality on which Monticello rested.

From the start of his public life, slavery was the circle Jefferson couldn't square. His wealth depended on it—without slaves, southern land was valueless—but he knew it was evil. True, he believed blacks to be an inferior race, genetically low in intelligence and without the capacity to assimilate that he ascribed to Indians. (When, to refute Jefferson's assertions of black inferiority, an ex-slave and self-taught mathematician sent him a complex almanac of his own devising, Jefferson concluded that the man must have had help.) Even so, with unflinching logic, Jefferson insisted that, as far as rights were concerned, all men were created equal. "Whatever be their degree of talent it is no measure of their rights," he

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wrote. "Because Sir Isaac Newton was superior to others in understanding, he was not therefore lord of the person or property of others." Slaves are men; all men are created equal; QED.

Slavery didn't just contravene America's fundamental principle of liberty but subverted it, Jefferson believed. "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God?" he wrote. "That they are not to be violated but with His wrath?" If our liberty rests on self-evident propositions rather than musty parchments, what happens to freedom when the propositions no longer seem so self-evident—when beliefs, which are as powerful as institutions, begin to waver?

Jefferson wrestled with this problem beginning with his first House of Burgesses term, when the 26-year-old newly fledged lawyer tried (and failed) to make it legal for Virginians to free their slaves. In 1778, he persuaded the state legislature to ban further importation of slaves. He believed that the institution could be limited and then gradually eradicated, after which the slaves would be expatriated—largely because their owners would have much to fear from their resentment. And justly: "The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other," he wrote. The American slave owner who fought for independence inflicts "on his fellow men a bondage one hour of which is fraught with more misery than ages of that which he rose up to oppose. . . . When the measure of their tears shall be full, when their groans shall have involved Heaven itself in darkness," Jefferson wrote in words that prefigure Lincoln's prophetic Second Inaugural, "doubtless a God of justice will awaken to their distress, and by diffusing light and liberality among their oppressors, or, at length, by his exterminating thunder manifest his attention to the things of this world, and that they are not to be left to the guidance of a blind fatality."

As a member of Congress under the Articles of Confederation, Jefferson strove to ban slavery in any new states carved out of the western territory won from Britain in the Revolution, but a sick delegate didn't show up to cast the winning vote. Four decades later, when Congress did exactly the opposite and passed the 1820 Missouri Compromise, permitting slavery in Missouri and in any new states formed in the southern part of his Louisiana Territory, he was aghast, viewing it as "the knell of the Union." He correctly predicted that the antagonism of slavery and antislavery factions would spark a nationwide conflagration. Though he held fast to his original solution, he no longer thought it would come to pass. The slave-owning states, he ruefully concluded, "have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other."

So what to make of Jefferson's relationship with Sally Hemings, which has come to symbolize the conflict, tragic to some and merely hypocritical to others, between America's highest ideals and its slaveholding Founding Fathers—a conflict that Jefferson fully recognized and that Irish poet Thomas Moore satirized as early as 1806, when he jeered at then-president Jefferson as "the patriot" who liked to "dream of freedom in his bondmaid's arms"? The Hemings family, whom Jefferson had inherited when his father-in-law's death left him one of Virginia's biggest slaveholders, made up almost all of Monticello's household staff, probably because they were so light-skinned that visitors mistook them for white. The Hemings matriarch, Betty, was said to be half-white, the daughter of an English sea captain, and at least seven of her children had white fathers, including Sally, the daughter of Jefferson's own father-in-law, John Wayles. Such was the state of race relations on the eighteenth-century Virginia plantation.

The question of whether Jefferson fathered Sally's six

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children, which her son Madison Hemings alleged in a lengthy 1873 newspaper interview, has now been settled by DNA testing, cross-checked with records showing which Jefferson men were at Monticello nine months before each child's birth. It was Jefferson himself. And unlike all the other Monticello slaves, Sally's sons were named for Jefferson's good friends.

The story Madison Hemings told is this. Jefferson had sent for his eight-year-old daughter, Polly, to join him in France in 1787, and her 13- or 14-year-old nursemaid, Sally, brought her across the ocean, one little girl in charge of another. When Jefferson was to return to America shortly after the fall of the Bastille, the pregnant Sally refused to come, since French law made her free. Jefferson promised her special privileges if she would return, and vowed to free her unborn child and any others she might have at 21, a promise he kept with their four children who reached adulthood.

No one can know the nature of their apparently monogamous relationship. Sally lived in one of Monticello's semi-underground rooms and looked after Jefferson's apartments and wardrobe, very light work. The only two extant eyewitness accounts describe her as "decidedly good looking" and "mighty near white"—three-quarters white, in fact—with "long straight hair down her back." Some historians opine, on no evidence, that she must have looked like her half-sister, Jefferson's beloved wife, Martha, whose deathbed she and her mother (who had helped raise Martha) never left, while the faint and grief-stricken Jefferson had to be carried to his room. Perhaps he loved her in Martha's place, they theorize. Perhaps she welcomed the attentions of her powerful and fascinating master.

I hope so; but it's all speculation. One can't forget Jefferson's own description of the master-slave relationship, with despotism on one side and submission on the other—written, to be sure, before Sally

BROWN BROTHERS

Thomas Sully's portrait of Jefferson, who posed in 1821, five years before his death

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arrived in Paris. Nor can one forget that Jefferson's greatest anxiety—panic, almost—about having Polly cross the ocean was that she might be captured by the Barbary pirates, then holding 22 Americans in slavery. "My mind revolts at the possibility of a capture," he wrote, as well it might, since he knew what slavery meant.

When you compare the houses of Virginia's other Founding Fathers with Monticello, what strikes you is how they've grown up organically, the products of historical development. You can see George Washington's increasing importance written all over Mount Vernon, for example. This gentleman-architect first raised the story-and-a-half 1740s house he had inherited from his half-brother to two stories, then expanded its middle to accommodate a grander hall and staircase, then added a pediment to try to disguise the asymmetry he had created, and finally built additions on either side with splendid presidential rooms, stylishly neoclassical by contrast with the earlier rococo. Similarly, as a young congressman, James Madison brought his bride home to his parents' 1760s brick house, Montpelier, and in 1797 built a private four-room extension for the two of them, with a separate entrance, like a duplex townhouse in a modern condo development. A new Tuscan-columned portico helped the two-family house look more like a single mansion, and in 1809 a new front door and new wings made the house look truly unified and presidential, with plenty of space for entertaining as well as for Mother Madison, who lived with them until her death at 97. But inside, you can still trace the piecemeal development.

Monticello, by contrast, looks like the product of a single, unified conception, springing from Jefferson's brain like Athena from the head of Zeus. It didn't, of course. It was over 50 years in the making: Jefferson and his wife began their ten years of marriage in one of the little pavilions, basically a studio apartment with a basement kitchen, all that then existed of Monticello. Jefferson kept changing his mind about what he wanted, especially after he returned from his four years in Paris, filled with visions of French neoclassicism and smitten with the Roman Maison Carrée at Nîmes, which he gazed at "whole hours . . . like a lover at his mistress." He tore down walls, designed historically accurate details in all the classical orders, extended porticoes, moved stone columns, enlarging and perfecting. "Putting up and pulling down [is] one of my favorite amusements," he commented, with the result that for years he found himself "living in a brick-kiln" with unplastered walls. But he produced something transcendent, like Palladio's villas or Lord Burlington's Chiswick House.

The years of turmoil to reach this result make one reconsider skeptically his description of the American Revolution as "a beautiful example of a government reformed by reason alone, without bloodshed." What about the years when Washington froze and his men starved trying to outlast British armies that chased them for 600 miles? As Jefferson's experience building Monticello should have taught him, nothing springs forth like a fully formed Platonic ideal. Yes, there is a self-evident right to liberty, but it took six years of bloodshed to establish that right in the New World. And many of those fighting believed that they were safeguarding not an abstract idea of liberty but the historical liberty that they had enjoyed during five or more generations of self-rule here in America and that belonged to them as freeborn Englishmen, protected by such "musty records" as Magna Carta.

There is a certain otherworldliness to Jefferson's political philosophy (compared with his hardheaded pragmatism as president). But one remembers that he did not fight in the Revolution, since he was serving as Virginia's governor. An unintentionally funny story he tells about having dinner with Alexander Hamilton and John Adams in 1791 perfectly encapsulates this quality. Hamilton gestured toward Jefferson's beloved portraits of Bacon, Newton, and Locke, and asked who they were. "My trinity of

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the three greatest men the world had ever produced," Jefferson replied, naming them. Hamilton paused a moment. "'The greatest man,' said he, 'that ever lived was Julius Caesar.'" The aghast Jefferson took this crack as yet one more proof of the anti-republicanism and monarchism he ascribed to Hamilton. But most likely Hamilton was having fun pricking Jefferson's piety, reminding him that statecraft isn't a matter of reason alone.

Jefferson's casualness about how the ideal actually gets made into reality, his willingness to put up and tear down and put up again, and live oblivious to the rubble meanwhile, rather than to extend and update what already exists like Washington at Mount Vernon or Madison at Montpelier, leads him to another political obliviousness, this one bloody rather than bloodless. He was an ardent supporter of the French Revolution, which broke out several weeks before he returned home to become secretary of state. He even helped draft the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*.

As the Revolution lurched leftward and the terror sent some of the uprising's early, moderate supporters—Jefferson's close friends—to the guillotine, his support did not waver. He deplored his friends' deaths, but the "liberty of the whole earth was depending on the issue of the contest," he averred. They were like battlefield casualties, who "would never have hesitated to give up their lives" for the goal that was at stake—though it was their supposed friends who had killed them. "My own affections have been deeply wounded by some of the martyrs to this cause," Jefferson wrote, "but rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated. Were there but an Adam and an Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than as it is now." As Burke said of the French revolutionaries and their effort to rebuild the world from scratch according to their idea of reason alone, without regard for history, prudence, or human life—and as has so often been true of rationalists in politics—"In their groves of their academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows."

One other remark Jefferson made about Hamilton sums up the otherworldly quality I have in mind. The treasury secretary "avowed the opinion," Jefferson complained, "that man could be governed by one of two motives only, force or interest." Government by force was out of the question in America, and that left interest. Here one remembers that Jefferson also didn't take part in the Constitutional Convention, since he was in Paris. Far from envisioning a republic of philosophers, where carefully educated citizens reason their way to self-evident truths about liberty and republican government, the writers of the Constitution created a republic of ordinary men, moved by ordinary interests that, checking and balancing one another like the centrifugal and centripetal forces that keep the planets in their orbits, would add up to liberty. Hamilton was merely expressing the fundamental American principle of government. At more than a few moments, Jefferson's rationalism clouded his realism.

Yet his rationalism proved invaluable to the republic not just at its founding but at its moment of greatest crisis, when it had to break with its historical past and square the circle he himself couldn't square. At Gettysburg, in the midst of the Civil War, Lincoln invoked the words of the Declaration of Independence to explain what the war was about: that the nation "conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" needed "a new birth of freedom" to include all men in that proposition. The abstraction, not the history, was at that moment our true national identity. And in the ever-growing consciousness of man's freedom that is the true meaning of history, Jefferson might have said, so it became.

"Mine, after all, may be a Utopian dream," as Jefferson said in old age in another context, "but being innocent, I thought I might indulge in it till I go to the land of dreams, and sleep there with the dreamers of all past and future times." He is among the greatest of those dreamers.

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Oh, to be in England

What the New Atheists Don't See

Theodore Dalrymple

To regret religion is to regret Western civilization.

The British parliament's first avowedly atheist member, Charles Bradlaugh, would stride into public meetings in the 1880s, take out his pocket watch, and challenge God to strike him dead in 60 seconds. God bided his time, but got Bradlaugh in the end. A slightly later atheist, Bertrand Russell, was once asked what he would do if it proved that he was mistaken and if he met his maker in the hereafter. He would demand to know, Russell replied with all the high-pitched fervor of his pedantry, why God had not made the evidence of his existence plainer and more irrefutable. And Jean-Paul Sartre came up with a memorable line: "God doesn't exist—the bastard!"

Sartre's wonderful outburst of disappointed rage suggests that it is not as easy as one might suppose to rid oneself of the notion of God. (Perhaps this is the time to declare that I am not myself a believer.) At the very least, Sartre's line implies that God's existence would solve some kind of problem—actually, a profound one: the transcendent purpose of human existence. Few of us, especially as we grow older, are entirely comfortable with the idea that life is full of sound and fury but signi-fies nothing. However much philosophers tell us that it is illogical to fear death, and that at worst it is only the process of dying that we should fear, people still fear death as much as ever. In like fashion, however many times philosophers say that it is up to us ourselves, and to no one else, to find the meaning of life, we continue to long for a transcendent purpose immanent in existence itself, independent of our own wills. To tell us that we should not feel this longing is a bit like telling someone in the first flush of love that the object of his affections is not worthy of them. The heart hath its reasons that reason knows not of.

Of course, men—that is to say, some men—have denied this truth ever since the Enlightenment, and have sought to find a way of life based entirely on reason. Far as I am from decrying reason, the attempt leads at best to Gradgrind and at worst to Stalin. Reason can never be the absolute dictator of man's mental or moral economy.

The search for the pure guiding light of reason, uncontaminated by human passion or metaphysical principles that go beyond all possible evidence, continues, however; and recently, an epidemic rash of books has declared success, at least if success consists of having slain the inveterate enemy of reason, namely religion. The philosophers Daniel Dennett, A. C. Grayling, Michel Onfray, and Sam Harris, biologist Richard Dawkins, and journalist and critic Christopher Hitchens have all written books roundly condemning religion and its works. Evidently, there is a tide in the affairs, if not of men, at least of authors.

The curious thing about these books is that the authors often appear to think that they are saying something new and brave. They imagine themselves to be like the intrepid explorer Sir Richard Burton, who in 1853 disguised himself as a Muslim merchant, went to Mecca, and then wrote a book about his unprecedented feat. The public appears to agree, for the neo-atheist books have sold by the hundred thousand. Yet with the possible exception of Dennett's, they advance no argument that I, the village atheist, could not have made by the age of 14 (Saint Anselm's ontological argument for God's existence gave me the greatest difficulty, but I had taken Hume to heart on the weakness of the argument from design).

I first doubted God's existence at about the age of nine.

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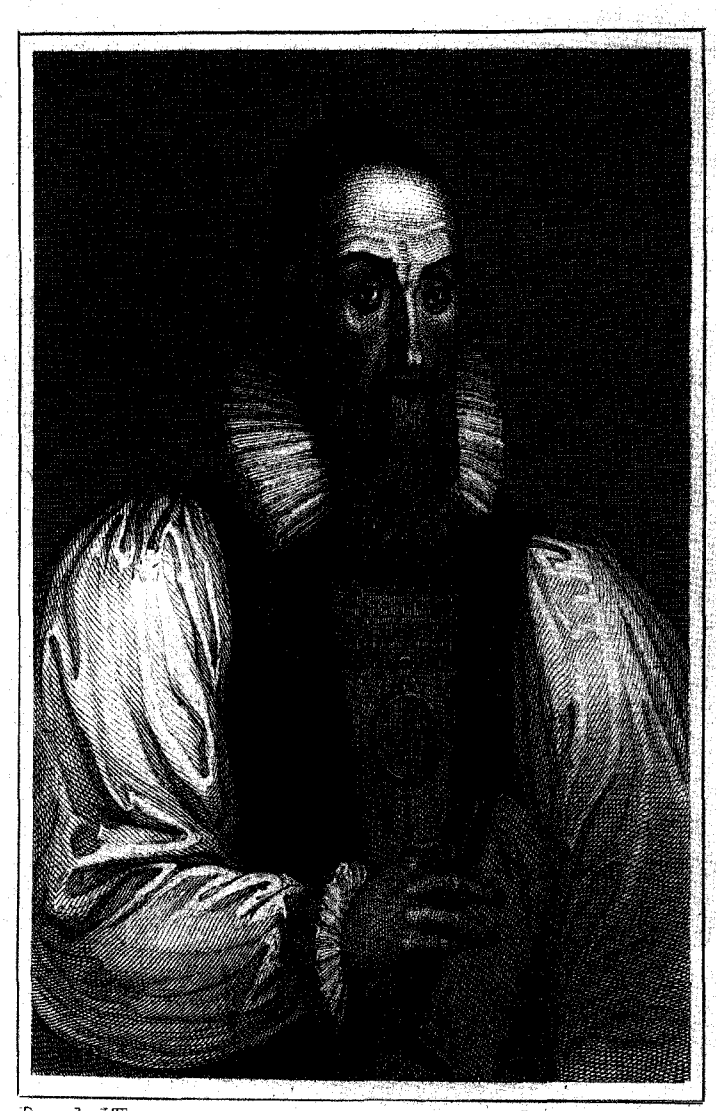
It was at the school assembly that I lost my faith. We had been given to understand that if we opened our eyes during prayers God would depart the assembly hall. I wanted to test this hypothesis. Surely, if I opened my eyes suddenly, I would glimpse the fleeing God? What I saw instead, it turned out, was the headmaster, Mr. Clinton, intoning the prayer with one eye closed and the other open, with which he beadily surveyed the children below for transgressions. I quickly concluded that Mr. Clinton did not believe what he said about the need to keep our eyes shut. And if he did not believe that, why should I believe in his God? In such illogical leaps do our beliefs often originate, to be disciplined later in life (if we receive enough education) by elaborate rationalization.

Dennett's *Breaking the Spell* is the least bad-tempered of the new atheist books, but it is deeply condescending to all religious people. Dennett argues that religion is explicable in evolutionary terms—for example, by our inborn human propensity, at one time valuable for our survival on the African savannahs, to attribute animate agency to threatening events.

For Dennett, to prove the biological origin of belief in God is to show its irrationality,


Drawn by J. Thurston.
Engraved by A. Warren.
JOSEPH HALL, BISHOP OF NORWICH.
From an original Picture in the Gallery of Emanuel College Cambridge.

MICHAEL NICHOLSON/CORBIS

Joseph Hall (1574–1656), bishop of Exeter and later of Norwich

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to break its spell. But of course it is a necessary part of the argument that all possible human beliefs, including belief in evolution, must be explicable in precisely the same way; or else why single out religion for this treatment? Either we test ideas according to arguments in their favor, independent of their origins, thus making the argument from evolution irrelevant, or all possible beliefs come under the same suspicion of being only evolutionary adaptations—and thus biologically contingent rather than true or false. We find ourselves facing a version of the paradox of the Cretan liar: all beliefs, including this one, are the products of evolution, and all beliefs that are products of evolution cannot be known to be true.

One striking aspect of Dennett's book is his failure to avoid the language of purpose, intention, and ontological moral evaluation, despite his fierce opposition to teleological views of existence: the coyote's "methods of locomotion have been ruthlessly optimized for efficiency." Or: "The stinginess of Nature can be seen everywhere we look." Or again: "This is a good example of Mother Nature's stinginess in the final accounting combined with absurd profligacy in the methods." I could go on, but I hope the point is clear. (And Dennett is not alone in this difficulty: Michel Onfray's *Atheist Manifesto*, so rich in errors and inexactitudes that it would take a book as long as his to correct them, says on its second page that religion prevents mankind from facing up to "reality in all its naked cruelty." But how can reality have any moral quality without having an immanent or transcendent purpose?)

No doubt Dennett would reply that he is writing in metaphors for the layman and that he could translate all his statements into a language without either moral evaluation or purpose included in it. Perhaps he would argue that his language is evidence that the spell still has a hold over even him, the breaker of the spell for the rest of humanity. But I am not sure that this response would be psychologically accurate. I think Dennett's use of the language of evaluation and purpose is evidence of a deep-seated metaphysical belief (however caused) that Providence exists in the universe, a belief that few people, confronted by the mystery of beauty and of existence itself, escape entirely. At any rate, it ill behooves Dennett to condescend to those poor primitives who still have a religious or providential view of the world: a view that, at base, is no more refutable than Dennett's metaphysical faith in evolution.

Dennett is not the only new atheist to employ religious language. In *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins quotes with approval a new set of Ten Commandments for atheists, which he obtained from an atheist website, without considering odd the idea that atheists require commandments at all, let alone precisely ten of them; nor does their metaphysical status seem to worry him. The last of the atheist's Ten Commandments ends with the following: "Question everything." Everything? Including the need to question everything, and so on ad infinitum?

Not to belabor the point, but if I questioned whether George Washington died in 1799, I could spend a lifetime trying to prove it and find myself still, at the end of my efforts, having to make a leap, or perhaps several leaps, of faith in order to believe the rather banal fact that I had set out to prove. Metaphysics is like nature: though you throw it out with a pitchfork, yet it always returns. What is confounded here is surely the abstract right to question everything with the actual exercise of that right on all possible occasions. Anyone who did exercise his right on all possible occasions would wind up a short-lived fool.

This sloppiness and lack of intellectual scruple, with the assumption of certainty where there is none, combined with adolescent shrillness and intolerance, reach an apogee in Sam Harris's book *The End of Faith*. It is not easy to do justice to the book's nastiness; it makes Dawkins's claim that religious education constitutes child abuse look sane and moderate.

Harris tells us, for example, that "we must find our way to

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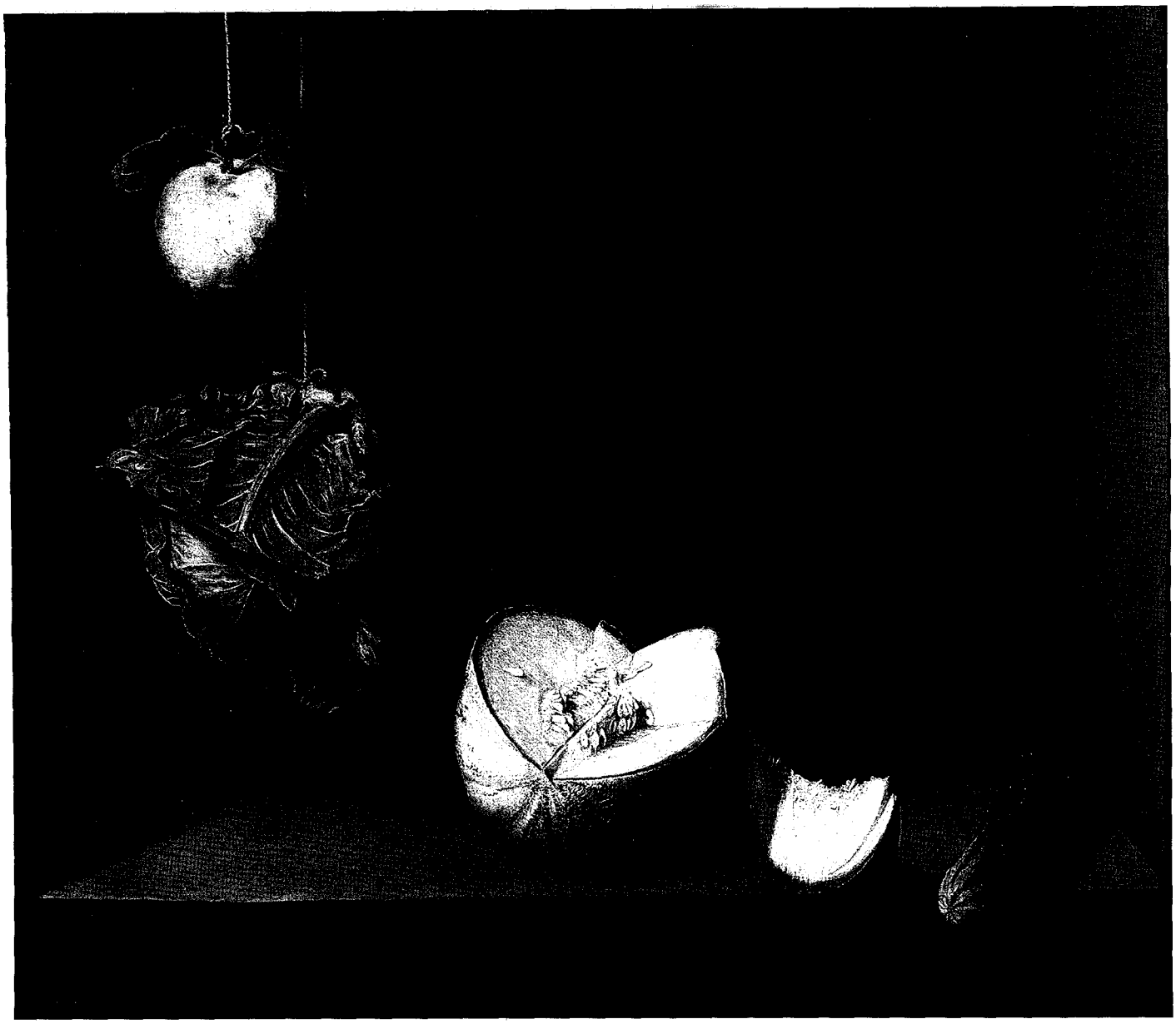

A still life by Juan Sánchez Cotán, a seventeenth-century Spanish priest, is a visual testimony of gratitude for what sustains us.

a time when faith, without evidence, disgraces anyone who would claim it. Given the present state of the world, there appears to be no other future worth wanting." I am glad that I am old enough that I shall not see the future of reason as laid down by Harris; but I am puzzled by the status of the compulsion in the first sentence that I have quoted. Is Harris writing of a historical inevitability? Of a categorical imperative? Or is he merely making a legislative proposal? This is who-will-rid-me-of-this-troublesome-priest language, ambiguous no doubt, but not open to a generous interpretation.

It becomes even more sinister when considered in conjunction with the following sentences, quite possibly the most disgraceful that I have read in a book by a man posing as a rationalist: "The link between belief and behavior raises the stakes considerably. Some propositions are so dangerous that it may be ethical to kill people for believing them. This may seem an extraordinary claim, but it merely enunciates an ordinary fact about the world in which we live."

Let us leave aside the metaphysical problems that these three sentences raise. For Harris, the most important question about genocide would seem to be: "Who is genociding whom?" To adapt Dostoyevsky slightly, starting from universal reason, I arrive at universal madness.

Lying not far beneath the surface of all the neo-atheist books is the kind of historiography that many of us adopted

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in our hormone-disturbed adolescence, furious at the discovery that our parents sometimes told lies and violated their own precepts and rules. It can be summed up in Christopher Hitchens's drumbeat in *God Is Not Great*: "Religion spoils everything."

What? The *Saint Matthew Passion*? The Cathedral of Chartres? The emblematic religious person in these books seems to be a Glasgow Airport bomber—a type unrepresentative of Muslims, let alone communicants of the poor old Church of England. It is surely not news, except to someone so ignorant that he probably wouldn't be interested in these books in the first place, that religious conflict has often been murderous and that religious people have committed hideous atrocities. But so have secularists and atheists, and though they have had less time to prove their mettle in this area, they have proved it amply. If religious belief is not synonymous with good behavior, neither is absence of belief, to put it mildly.

In fact, one can write the history of anything as a chronicle of crime and folly. Science and technology spoil everything: without trains and IG Farben, no Auschwitz; without transistor radios and mass-produced machetes, no Rwandan genocide. First you decide what you hate, and then you gather evidence for its hatefulness. Since man is a fallen creature (I use the term metaphorically rather than in its religious sense), there is always much to find.

The thinness of the new atheism is evident in its approach to our civilization, which until recently was religious to its core. To regret religion is, in fact, to regret our civilization and its monuments, its achievements, and its legacy. And in my own view, the absence of religious faith, provided that such faith is not murderously intolerant, can have a deleterious effect upon human character and personality. If you empty the world of purpose, make it one of brute fact alone, you empty it (for many people, at any rate) of reasons for gratitude, and a sense of gratitude is necessary for both happiness and decency. For what can soon, and all too easily, replace gratitude is a sense of entitlement. Without gratitude, it is hard to appreciate, or be satisfied with, what you have: and life will become an existential shopping spree that no product satisfies.

A few years back, the National Gallery held an exhibition of Spanish still-life paintings. One of these paintings had a physical effect on the people who sauntered in, stopping them in their tracks; some even gasped. I have never seen an image have such an impact on people. The painting, by Juan Sánchez Cotán, now hangs in the San Diego Museum of Art. It showed four fruits and vegetables, two suspended by string, forming a parabola in a gray stone window.

Even if you did not know that Sánchez Cotán was a seventeenth-century Spanish priest, you could know that the painter was religious: for this picture is a visual testimony of gratitude for the beauty of those things that sustain us. Once you have seen it, and concentrated your attention on it, you will never take the existence of the humble cabbage—or of anything else—quite so much for granted, but will see its beauty and be thankful for it. The painting is a permanent call to contemplation of the meaning of human life, and as such it arrested people who ordinarily were not, I suspect, much given to quiet contemplation.

The same holds true with the work of the great Dutch still-life painters. On the neo-atheist view, the religious connection between Catholic Spain and Protestant Holland is one of conflict, war, and massacre only: and certainly one cannot deny this history. And yet something more exists. As with Sánchez Cotán, only a deep reverence, an ability not to take existence for granted, could turn a representation of a herring on a pewter plate into an object of transcendent beauty, worthy of serious reflection.

I recently had occasion to compare the writings of the neo-atheists with those of Anglican divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth

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centuries. I was visiting some friends at their country house in England, which had a library of old volumes; since the family of the previous owners had a churchman in every generation, many of the books were religious. In my own neo-atheist days, I would have scorned these works as pertaining to a nonexistent entity and containing nothing of value. I would have considered the authors deluded men, who probably sought to delude others for reasons that Marx might have enumerated.

But looking, say, into the works of Joseph Hall, D.D., I found myself moved: much more moved, it goes without saying, than by any of the books of the new atheists. Hall was bishop of Exeter and then of Norwich; though a moderate Puritan, he took the Royalist side in the English civil war and lost his see, dying in 1656 while Cromwell was still Lord Protector.

Except by specialists, Hall remains almost entirely forgotten today. I opened one of the volumes at random, his *Contemplations Upon the Principal Passages of the Holy Story*. Here was the contemplation on the sickness of Hezekiah:

> Hezekiah was freed from the siege of the Assyrians, but he is surprised with a disease. He, that delivered him from the hand of his enemies, smites him with sickness. God doth not let us loose from all afflictions, when he redeems us from one.
>
> To think that Hezekiah was either not thankful enough for his deliverance, or too much lifted up with the glory of so miraculous a favour, were an injurious misconstruction of the hand of God, and an uncharitable censure of a holy prince; for, though no flesh and blood can avoid the just desert of bodily punishment, yet God doth not always strike with an intuition of sin: sometimes he regards the benefit of our trial; sometimes, the glory of his mercy in our cure.

Hall surely means us to infer that whatever happens to us, however unpleasant, has a meaning and purpose; and this enables us to bear our sorrows with greater dignity and less suffering. And it is part of the existential reality of human life that we shall always need consolation, no matter what progress we make. Hall continues:

> When, as yet, he had not so much as the comfort of a child to succeed him, thy prophet is sent to him, with the heavy message of his death: "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." It is no small mercy of God, that he gives us warning of our end. . . . No soul can want important affairs, to be ordered for a final dissolution.

This is the language not of rights and entitlements, but of something much deeper—a universal respect for the condition of being human.

For Hall, life is instinct with meaning: a meaning capable of controlling man's pride at his good fortune and consoling him for his ill fortune. Here is an extract from Hall's *Characters of Virtues and Vices*:

> He is an happy man, that hath learned to read himself, more than all books; and hath so taken out this lesson, that he can never forget it: that knows the world, and cares not for it; that, after many traverses of thoughts, is grown to know what he may trust to; and stands now equally armed for all events: that hath got the mastery at home; so as he can cross his will without a mutiny, and so please it that he makes it not a wanton: that, in earthly things, wishes no more than nature; in spiritual, is ever graciously ambitious: that, for his condition, stands on his own feet, not needing to lean upon the great; and can so frame his thoughts to his estate, that when he hath least, he cannot want, because he is as free from desire, as superfluity: that hath seasonably broken the headstrong restiness of prosperity; and can now manage it, at pleasure:

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upon whom, all smaller crosses light as hailstones upon a roof; and, for the greater calamities, he can take them as tributes of life and tokens of love; and, if his ship be tossed, yet he is sure his anchor is fast. If all the world were his, he could be no other than he is; no whit gladder of himself, no whit higher in his carriage; because he knows, that contentment lies not in the things he hath, but in the mind that values them.

Though eloquent, this appeal to moderation as the key to happiness is not original; but such moderation comes more naturally to the man who believes in something not merely higher than himself, but higher than mankind. After all, the greatest enjoyment of the usages of this world, even to excess, might seem rational when the usages of this world are all that there is.

In his *Occasional Meditations*, Hall takes perfectly ordinary scenes—ordinary, of course, for his times—and derives meaning from them. Here is his meditation "Upon the Flies Gathering to a Galled Horse":

> How these flies swarm to the galled part of this poor beast; and there sit, feeding upon that worst piece of his flesh, not meddling with the other sound parts of his skin! Even thus do malicious tongues of detractors: if a man have any infirmity in his person or actions, that they will be sure to gather unto, and dwell upon; whereas, his commendable parts and well-deservings are passed by, without mention, without regard. It is an envious self-love and base cruelty, that causeth this ill disposition in men: in the mean time, this only they have gained; it must needs be a filthy creature, that feeds upon nothing but corruption.

Surely Hall is not suggesting (unlike Dennett in his unguarded moments) that the biological purpose of flies is to feed off injured horses, but rather that a sight in nature can be the occasion for us to reflect imaginatively on our morality. He is not raising a biological theory about flies, in contradistinction to the theory of evolution, but thinking morally about human existence. It is true that he would say that everything is part of God's providence, but, again, this is no more (and no less) a metaphysical belief than the belief in natural selection as an all-explanatory principle.

Let us compare Hall's meditation "Upon the Sight of a Harlot Carted" with Harris's statement that some people ought perhaps to be killed for their beliefs:

> With what noise, and tumult, and zeal of solemn justice, is this sin punished! The streets are not more full of beholders, than clamours. Every one strives to express his detestation of the fact, by some token of revenge: one casts mire, another water, another rotten eggs, upon the miserable offender. Neither, indeed, is she worthy of less: but, in the mean time, no man looks home to himself. It is no uncharity to say, that too many insult in this just punishment, who have deserved more. . . . Public sins have more shame; private may have more guilt. If the world cannot charge me of those, it is enough, that I can charge my soul of worse. Let others rejoice, in these public executions: let me pity the sins of others, and be humbled under the sense of my own.

Who sounds more charitable, more generous, more just, more profound, more honest, more humane: Sam Harris or Joseph Hall, D.D., late lord bishop of Exeter and of Norwich?

No doubt it helps that Hall lived at a time of sonorous prose, prose that merely because of its sonority resonates in our souls; prose of the kind that none of us, because of the time in which we live, could ever equal. But the style applies to the thought as well as the prose; and I prefer Hall's charity to Harris's intolerance.

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Letters

Gangsta Chains

To the editor:

You write that children stuck in ghetto schools are taught that they "should nevertheless have high self-esteem" because they are fine just as they are [Myron Magnet, "In the Heart of Freedom, in Chains," Summer 2007]. I spent a year teaching public school in Virginia, and the kids didn't believe that they were just good; they believed that they were *magnificent*. But they didn't want to learn about anything that didn't involve blacks of a certain class. Poor as they were, most had MP3 players, iPods, or cell phones. They all wanted to listen to rap while working—if they worked at all.

I've never met kids so impervious to learning. They had no aspirations beyond the material. Efforts to open them up to new ideas were met with indifference. These kids had made a choice to be ignorant, and they refused to let anyone convince them otherwise.

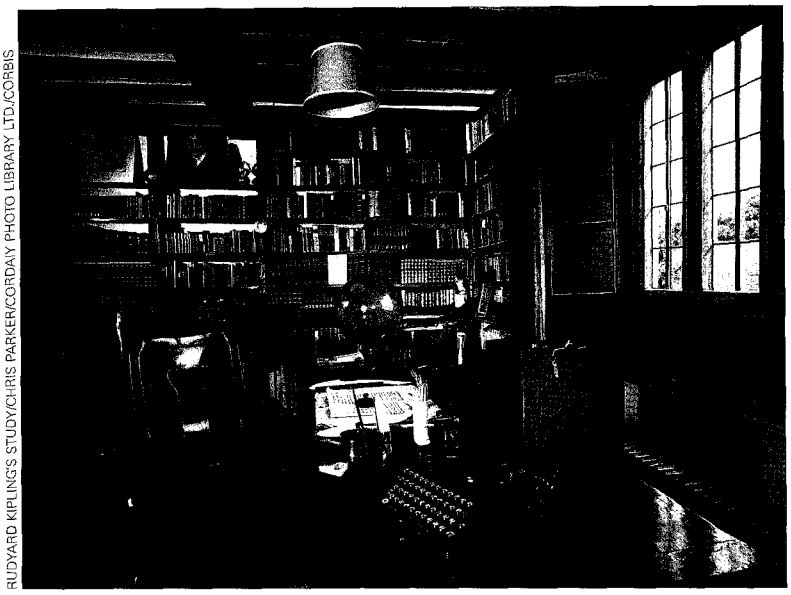
Helen Lewis
Newport News, VA

To the editor:

Martin Joos's book *The Five Clocks* identifies the intimate, casual, consultative, formal, and frozen styles of English. The casual style—circuitous and laced with meaningless emotionalism and profanity—seems to be the only one used by the population known as the "underclass."

Can we understand any social problem without understanding the language issue?

James Janecek
New Brighton, MN



RUDYARD KIPLING'S STUDY/CHRIS PARKER/CORDAIY PHOTO LIBRARY LTD./CORBIS

To the editor:

During the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, urban flight by educated, middle-class, and upwardly mobile African-Americans precipitated the destruction of historically black communities. Jobs, schools, and businesses left urban communities in droves. We are now witnessing the results of urban black flight and the welfare system: widespread ignorance, mayhem, and violence against our people by our people. Yet our urban brothers and sisters had enough moxie to make it through relatively intact. They created their own variant of the English language, which we misnamed Ebonics. They created a lucrative and often-copied music called hip-hop. They gave their children distinct identities, with names like Shenikua and Royhame.

What were Bill Cosby and others doing when our poor communities were being ripped to shreds by the post–civil rights black exodus? The Cosby generation failed us when we needed its help.

Heru Ammen
Temecula, CA

Myron Magnet responds:

As the first two of these letters vividly show, economic deprivation alone doesn't define the underclass. The real problems are intellectual deprivation and—at the furthest extreme—deficits of basic socialization that all but doom individuals to failure. Such basic deficits, hard for any later schooling or training to repair, flow from family breakdown. A ghetto culture that perpetuates isolation with its own in-group names and dialect—and that endorses and even celebrates the pathology of family

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Letters

breakdown and marginalization with hip-hop's nihilism, resentment, misogyny, and rage—is no solution (as Heru Ammen would have it) but only a worsening of the problem.

Opera Wars

To the editor:

Bravo, Heather Mac Donald ["The Abduction of Opera," Summer 2007]. As an opera professional in Germany for the last eight years, I can say that the intellectual dishonesty and elitist snobbery that have produced and defended Regietheater are crippling the European opera houses and having a dramatic impact on opera attendance. I have seen Regietheater productions, refused engagements in that style, and hope that it goes the way of the dodo. As for Calixto Bieito, he should be paying for the therapy he so clearly needs.

S.L.S.
Via e-mail

To the editor:

This is a preposterous article. Opera as an art form is not realistic—and it is this that Regietheater attempts to address. Berlin's opera houses are devoted to opera as a vital, contemporary force. Someone who sees opera as a museum art should stick to the Metropolitan Opera; it is a laughingstock.

Meaning changes; it appears to be only the U.S. that wants to cling to simplistic and "literal" interpretation. Regietheater productions provoke not just controversy, but *thinking*. They show us that opera has contemporary relevance.

David Haslett
Berlin, Germany

Heather Mac Donald responds:

Mr. Haslett assumes that treating opera as a "vital, contemporary force" requires burying a composer's musical understanding under a grotesque gloss from some talentless director's puny, pop-culture-sated brain. Yet somehow, operas have managed to survive centuries of what Mr. Haslett calls "simplistic" interpretation whose primary obligation was to the composer's intentions. Only a narcissist would demand that every precious work from the past parrot our current obsessions. Of course, interpretation is always complicated and will never literally recover the "original" meaning of a work. But it takes someone wholly devoid of musical understanding and literary sensibility to hear in the score for the *Abduction from the Seraglio* the soundtrack for a snuff film.

Some Racket

To the editor:

Although a liberal, I agree wholeheartedly with Bruce Bawer's article ["The Peace Racket," Summer 2007]. But I don't think conservatives are ones to argue that "real education exposes students to a range of ideas and trains them to think critically about all orthodoxies," given that they uncritically accept unbridled capitalism and educational institutions that bring religious ideology to bear on every question. Placing ideology over the hard task of evaluating ideas is not unique to the Left.

Brian Erb
Omaha, NE

To the editor:

Bruce Bawer reminds us to trust freedom and to remember that tyrants never learn. Every September, I recall when I landed at Nagasaki with the 2nd Marine Division in the original occupation of Japan following World War II. When we landed in Japan, for what came to be the most humane occupation of a defeated enemy in recorded history, it was with great appreciation and thanksgiving for the atomic bomb team, including the air crew of the *Enola Gay*. Countless American homes had been spared the Gold Star flag, including, I'm sure, my own.

Jim Baxter
Santa Maria, CA

Bruce Bawer responds:

I can assure Mr. Erb that, whatever political label he chooses to attach to me, when I describe a "real education" as teaching students "to think critically about all orthodoxies," I *mean* all orthodoxies. He could dispel any suspicion that I am excessively patient with religious orthodoxy by reading either of my last two books, *Stealing Jesus* and *While Europe Slept*.

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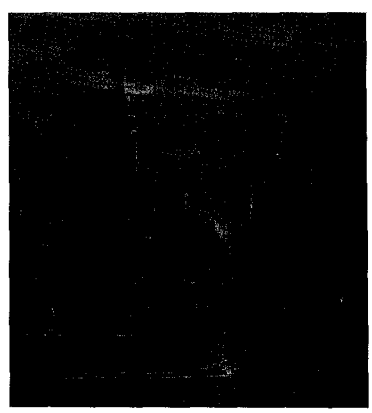
Guy Sorman is the author of numerous books, including *The Empire of Lies,* forthcoming from Encounter. He lives in Paris and is the president of the publishing house Éditions Sorman.



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Building Bridges

Matthew Clavel

It was my second year teaching in the Bronx, and Timothy was one of my toughest fourth-graders. Prone to wild rages and showing dismal academic skills, he had already been in trouble with the police. I waited with dread for Timothy's reaction to our bridge-building activity. Our lesson involved simple ingredients: small marshmallows and toothpicks. After a quick overview of engineering principles, I split the class into groups and made each one responsible for constructing a bridge. I would judge the bridges based on how far they could stretch when the desks beneath them were pulled apart.

I paced the classroom for a while amid squeals of excitement, and then glanced at Timothy. Hunched over a table with his group, he was entranced. He and his teammates were well on their way to building a long, unwieldy-looking, but surprisingly strong frame. The boy was a natural; I was stunned—and delighted. Timothy's toothpick-and-marshmallow bridge would be a highlight of our competition.

That was seven years ago. I now teach fifth grade at an elite private boys' school in Manhattan. My engaged, knowledgeable boys learn in a laid-back atmosphere. Our budget is generous, and I recently obtained permission to purchase old-fashioned "Erector sets"—giant boxes full of thousands of metal and plastic pieces. Remembering my Bronx experiences, I envisioned a weekly building session. After vainly scouring New York for these outdated kits, I turned to the Web and finally managed to order three boxes from a company called Merkur. I wasn't surprised that my homeroom quickly became enamored with the new Erector sets. Every week, we set aside 30 minutes for the boys to work in small groups. It's a fantastic chance for them to take an intelligent break from their classes. I think that kids in New York's public schools would benefit, too.

Our public schools need to explore activities that focus on boys. While my current school boasts regular gym, sports, and recess, Timothy's offered few chances for kids to run around. During my first year, the children had just one gym period a week, and after-lunch recesses were rare treats. The inactivity had a disproportionate effect on the boys, who seem to need to blow off steam more than girls. Classroom outbursts, even fights, were part of daily life there. My students' concentration problems may have contributed to their abysmal test scores, too. A weekly exercise with screwdrivers and Erector sets might have helped them focus.

Building exercises also strengthen teamwork. As with team sports, a well-structured activity in which groups of kids build cranes, cars, and bridges forces them to rely on one another. To motivate the boys even more, a bit of competition (whose crane can lift the largest load?) helps. Better to build teamwork in this context than with the fuzzy "group learning" beloved by progressive educators, which impedes real learning.

Another key skill is problem solving. Building with Erector sets, I've found, pushes kids to find solutions on their own. In affluent communities, the excessive presence of tutors has discouraged kids from thinking for themselves; in low-income areas, too many kids simply fall behind and give up. Further, the U.S. will need far more architects, engineers, urban planners, and computer minds as the century progresses. We will face robust competition from both Europe and Asia. A well-run building curriculum, however modest, might help get kids to consider careers that our nation will need.

Building projects also encourage alternative career options for those who struggle in school. Indeed, we should expand high school vocational programs, which are often derided for asking less of children who could be going to college. After all, everyone has to go to college, right? Maybe, but plenty of kids would excel, and earn decent livings, as plumbers, electricians, and auto mechanics.

I haven't kept in touch with Timothy, but I hope he has succeeded. He would make a great carpenter.

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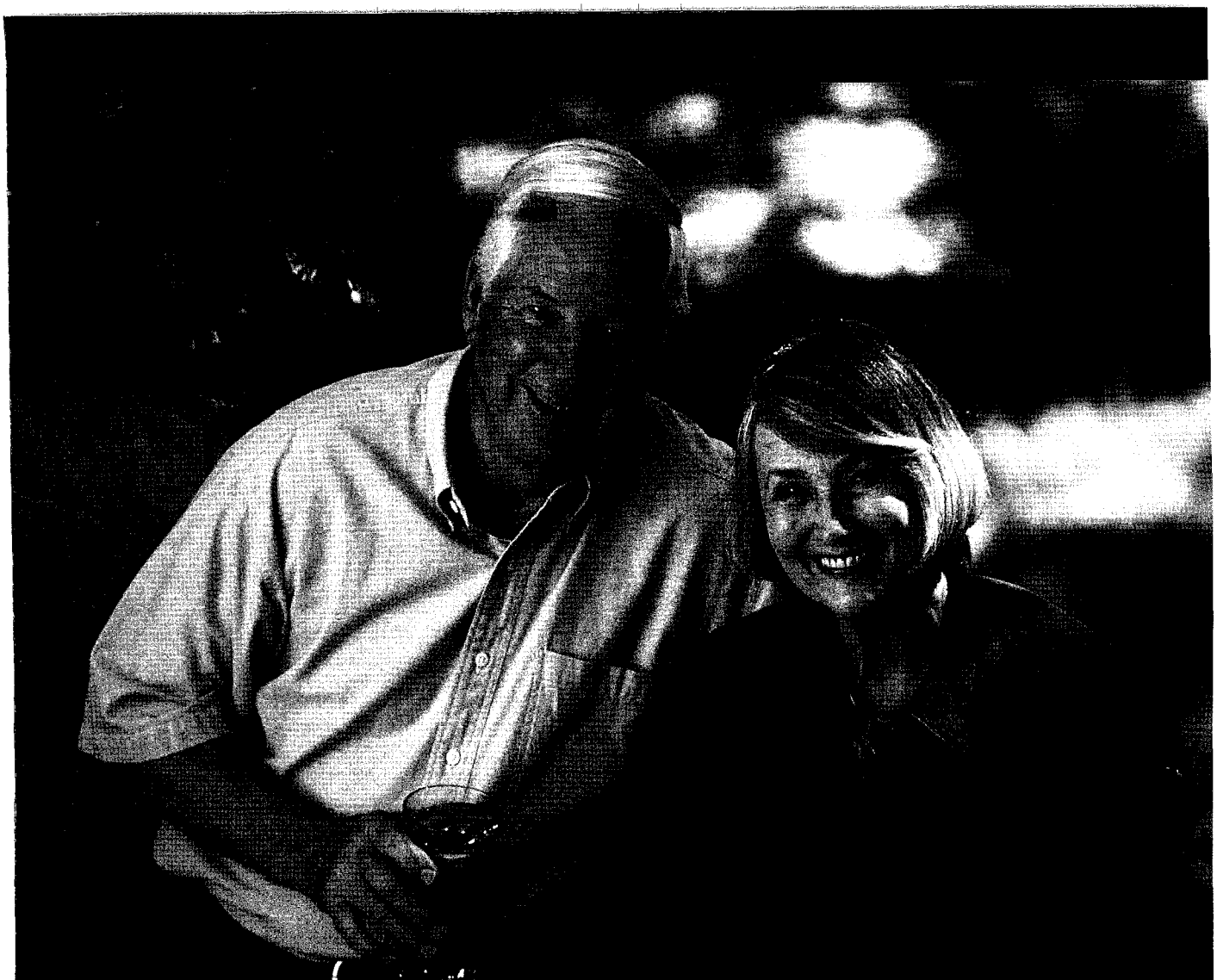

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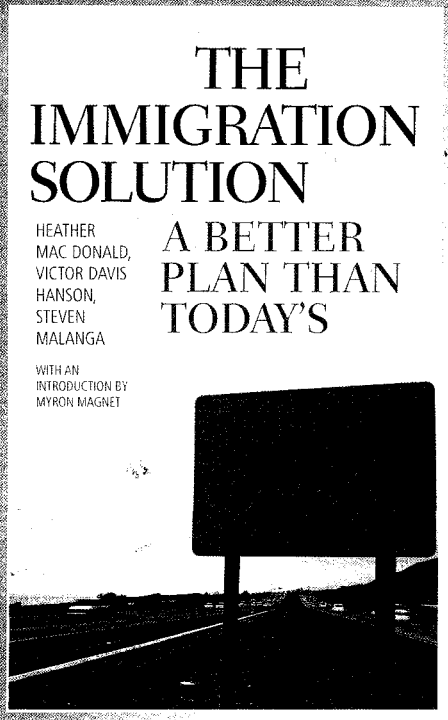
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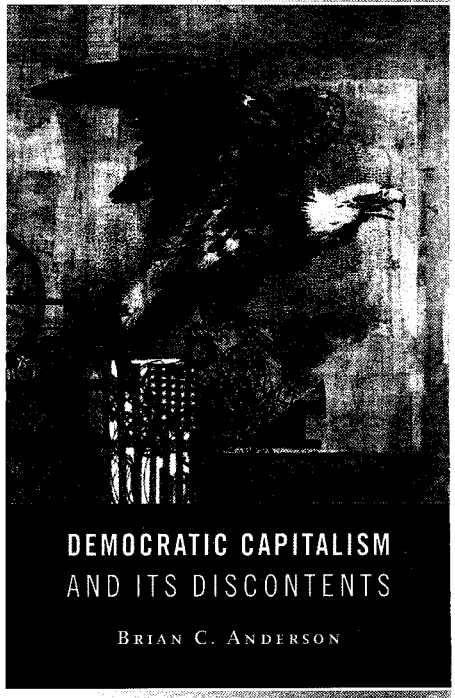

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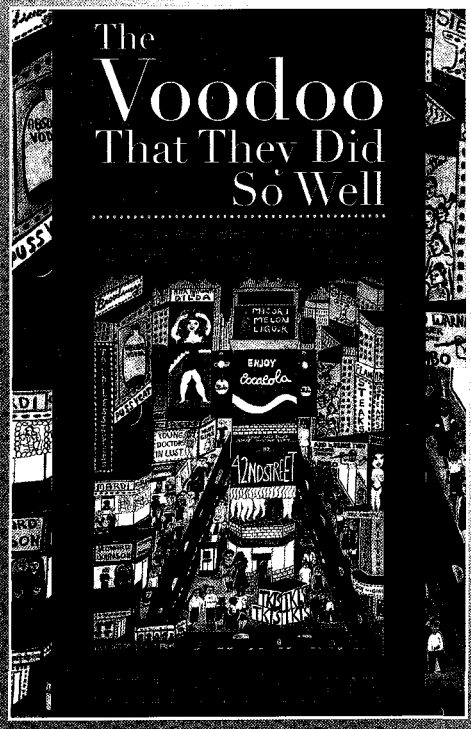

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